Witch Winnie in Venice

by

Elizabeth W. Champney

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WITCH WINNIE IN VENICE

AND

THE ALCHEMIST'S STORY

BY

ELIZABETH W. CHAMPNEY

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INTRODUCTION.

"SHREDS and Patches" is the title of the last chapter of the present volume; and the author is aware that the entire book—with its scraps of history "cut out of whole cloth;" its numerous quotations; its old characters familiar in former stories; its personal impressions, theories, and moral reflections; its endeavor to be instructive and yet amusing; and all this held together by the most transparent film of plot—is but "a thing of shreds and patches."

My only apology is that this is exactly the process employed in the manufacture of the finest point appliqué lace. It is the work of many hands. The tiny flowers may have been cut from other and more antique specimens. They are "applied" on a web of cheaper machine-made net, or united by *brides* or tiny lacets, and bordered more or less elaborately, while the spaces between the sprigs and flowers were filled in with various kinds of stitches.

Then when the pattern is complete comes the more mechanical and laborious task of uniting all together by a stitch called "assemblage" or "fine joining."

This assemblage has been my work, and I have not found it tedious, for the appliqué flowers, the work of other hands which I have introduced, have been the part that I have loved and admired; and they have seemed to fit themselves into new patterns, so that it has needed no ingenuity of mine to arrange them. And so I offer you the finished web, making no claim for originality, no other plea for the heterogeneous character of the work.

The historical background which I have taken is that of the Italian Renaissance, on a few of whose brilliant names I have endeavored to flash a side light:

"The epoch ends, the world is still,
The age has talked and worked its fill,
The famous orators have shone,
The famous poets sung and gone,
The famous men of war have fought,
The famous speculators thought,
The famous players, sculptors wrought,
The famous painters filled their wall,
The famous critics judged it all.

And in the after silence sweet
Now strifes are hushed, our ears doth meet
Ascending pure the bell-like fame
Of this or that down-trodden name,
Delicate spirits pushed away
In the hot press of the noon day.
On that wide plain, now wrapt in gloom,
Where many a splendor finds its tomb,
Many spent fames and fallen mights,
The one or two immortal lights
Rise slowly up into the sky
To shine there everlastingly."

Such were many of the Venetian painters of this period, such the gentle architect Sansovino. That the student may have a distinct idea of the chronological sequence of events, I give here the dates of birth and death of some of the personages mentioned in the story, and the beginning and end of the pontificates of three of the Popes:

Giovanni Bellini	born 1427,	died 1516.
Palma Vecchio	" 1480,	" 1528.
Giorgione	" 1477,	" 1511.
Titian	" 1477,	" 1576.
Tintoretto	" 1518,	" 1594.
Paul Veronese	" 1528,	" 1588.
Sansovino	" 1479,	" 1570.
Bembo	" 1470,	" 1547.

POPES.

Alexander V. (Rodrigo Borgia)....from 1492 to 1503.
Julius II. (De Rovere)..... " 1503 " 1513.
Leo X. (Giovanni de Medici)..... " 1513 " 1522.

The old alchemist Giovanni Zanelli is entirely a fictitious character; and the plot, supposed to have been planned for his rescue by Titian and his friends, has, of course, no foundation in history.

The briefest residence in Venice sets one to dreaming of the olden time. It is all so real, so present. There is no place where the present is so unreal, the actual so out of place. The old senators look out immortally upon us from the canvases of Titian, and seem to reproach us for taking liberties with their city and invading their palaces. The very hotels were the homes of the illustrious and noble of other days. The Royal Hotel Danieli, on the Riva Degli Schiavoni, much frequented by English and Americans, was built by the Dandolos in the fourteenth century, and was successively the palace of the Mocenigos, the Bernardi, and the Nani. Our own hotel, opposite the Salute, was the ancient home of the Zuchelli; and every tourist has a sense of

proprietorship (at least as far as having once been its guest) in some palace on the Grand Canal. But the author imagines her friends to have more than a tourist's transitory interest in Venice—in her art, her buildings, her history, and her people. And so she invites her reader (as Lord Houghton did his), and as Angelo might have asked Tib, to see the city.

"Not with the fancy's flashing play,
The traveller's vulgar theme,
Where following objects chase away
The moment's dazzling dream—

"Not thus art thou content to see
The city of my love,
Whose beauty is a thought to me
All mortal thoughts above;
And pass in dull, unseemly haste,
Nor sight nor spirit clear,
As if the first bewildering taste
Were all the banquet here!

"When the proud sea for Venice' sake
Itself consents to wear
The semblance of a land-locked lake
Inviolably fair—
Surely may we to similar calm
Our noisy lives subdue,
And bare our bosoms to such balm
As God has given to few.

" Thou knowest this, thou lingerest here,
Rejoicing to remain ;
The plashing oars fall on thy ear
Like a familiar strain.
Come out upon the broad Lagoon,
Come for the hundredth time,
Our thoughts shall make a pleasant tune,
Our words a worthy rhyme ;
And thickly round us we will set
Such visions as were seen
By Tizian and by Tintoret
And dear old Giambellin."

WITCH WINNIE IN VENICE.

CHAPTER I.

JUST A LITTLE MISTAKE IN THE BEGINNING.

OF course it was all Winnie's fault, only one of her whimsical pranks, but it brought about a long train of misunderstandings which might have separated forever two very congenial people, had not—but really one cannot tell an entire story in a single sentence.

While Winnie was still in Holland, Adelaide, who, it will be remembered, had married Pro-

fessor Waite, arrived with her husband, and persuaded Winnie to spend the winter with them in Venice, where Tib, who had laid by a little money of her own earning, agreed to meet them. The four took the *apartemente signorile*, or main floor in a palace on the Grand Canal. Professor Waite had received an order to prepare some mural paintings for a public building in America, and the lofty ball-room of the palace made an excellent studio in which to paint these great canvases. They had timed their meeting so exactly that they were scarcely settled before Tib arrived, and all began to work with enthusiasm. Winnie and Tib had rooms whose balcony looked up toward the Rialto Bridge and down toward the Church of the Salute. Professor Waite was as kind and helpful as in the old days ; and they took their studies to him for criticism. They made frequent gondola trips to interesting spots for sketching, and Adelaide was always ready to accompany them to the historic places which they knew so well already from report, but which they were eager to see with their own eyes. There was so much to explore, so many new sensations waiting on every hand, that it

was some little time before Winnie set her palette; but Tib, who grudged every moment for her art, and felt that all these glorious hours of privilege were fast stealing away, began to work from the outset. There was one weekly interruption into which she was drawn, out of deference to Adelaide. The Waites speedily gathered about them a coterie of friends, and every Thursday afternoon the great canvases were moved back, rugs were spread down, and there was an informal reception. The friends who came were chiefly members of the resident American colony, with an occasional passing tourist, and, as they became better acquainted, a sprinkling of the Italian element.

Tib rebelled against this evening "wasted" in society. "I did not come to Venice to see people, but to see Venice," she said to Winnie. "I would rather have a building like the Doge's Palace talk to me than to listen to the twaddle and commonplaces of ordinary society."

"That old ball-room looks as if it could say a thing or two if it were so minded," Winnie had replied. "Sit on the divan in the corner and study the frescoes on the ceiling and the

old portraits on the wall. They 'could a tale unfold,' and perhaps they will to you."

It was here that Winnie had left her for a few moments on their first Thursday, seated quite by herself, listening with amused scorn to the mingled stream of three conversations which drifted in upon her, and quite unaware that a young man in one of the groups, whom a vivacious girl was endeavoring to entertain, was regarding her with interest.

"What a picture that girl with the Madonna face makes, with her calm, statuesque profile outlined against those Oriental hangings!" he said to his companion.

The girl had just made a lively remark which he had entirely missed, and she looked at Tib, a little piqued by his admiration, and replied doubtfully: "Yes; but don't you think it a little affected to assume that absorbed, beatific air when one is in company? She looks a trifle posed, it seems to me—as though she were quite conscious of the effect she is creating."

"Do you think so?" the young man asked. "Now, to me her attitude is delightfully unconscious. I rather like her being silent, too. A silent woman usually says something worth

listening to when she does speak, and affords a refreshing contrast to the glib chatterer who rattles off a mess of nonsense on all occasions.''

A look of rage shot across the girl's face. The young man, with all his culture, was a trifle oblivious ; and it had not occurred to him that his remarks might have a personal application.

"I am willing to wager that when that girl next opens her mouth it will be to make some such sententious observation as 'I am awfully hungry!'" said the angry young woman. "Those spiritual, intellectual faces often belong to very sordid or even volatile natures.''

"Volatile! Never! I accept your wager. We will step near enough to overhear a bit of her conversation with the next person who speaks to her ; and if it does not prove that she possesses a very superior mind, I am no judge of character."

Winnie was passing, on her way to drag Tib from her seclusion, and overheard this last remark. "Who is it that this very judicial young man is going to measure in this authoritative fashion?" she wondered. "How very

unjust of him! I do hope the poor victim will pass her examination."

"Have the palace walls been talking to you, all alone in this corner?" she asked of Tib. "If not, I fear you have been boring yourself to death."

"On the contrary," Tib replied, "I have been much amused while listening to the elevated conversation of three different groups—two artists, three scandal-loving old dames, and some girls who were comparing gowns and cooking recipes. They have scattered now, but for a time their chat blended in a most pleasing symphony—something like this: 'Now, dear, don't you think that five chaperones . . . mixed in one Welsh rabbit, beaten until perfectly smooth and hashed up fine, with just a least *soupçon* of garlic . . . and bitumen—you can't get your perfect tone-effect without bitumen . . . I am positive that Rembrandt, and Titian, and all the great tonalists used . . . to take her to the Moulin Rouge . . . really it was positively reckless in her to be seen in public in such disreputable company. She might have managed her little consolations so much better . . . now, I always

begin with lobster *à la* Newburgh, and then a cheese *soufflé*, or some sort of *paté* for an *entré*, with a *filet*, and birds with the salad ; and then for dessert some simple thing like . . . a group of modern symbolists and impressionists, with all their realistic embodiment of the tragedy of human life, their august melancholy and poetic intensity, their scorn of prettiness, and their worship of mysticism, and . . . the sweetest Paquin gown, copied from one of Pompadour's, with the sleeves *bouillonnées* and *paillottées*, and the dearest red velvet stole, coming way down the front, all elaborately embroidered and festooned with . . . soft-shell crabs and pistache ice cream, and . . . the worst scandal of the season, culminating in a divorce case that was really shocking. The wretched husband committed suicide. They had the best medical experts ; but it was of no use, there was no remedy known to science for that kind of poison. You see, he had made death sure by . . . lunching with me. I made the méringue myself. . . . It was very sad, a scandal of this kind . . . always depends for its success on having it hot. You pop them into the chafing-dish and add plenty of cayenne and

tobasco, and in two minutes it is done to a turn, provided you don't forget to put in . . . MacMonnie's "Bacchante;" or if you prefer, some of those little Tanagra figurines; but really the best examples of antique art are to be found . . . at the opera. Her costume was a dream, only a bird of paradise in her hair, and the most ravishing orchids, the severe simplicity of . . . a Puvis de Chavannes, as near an approach to pure spirit as one can attain in this world, even when we consider that . . . the punch was really much too strong, and the champagne flowed like water.'"

While Tib was running on in caricature of the jumbled conversations to which she had listened, Winnie could have screamed with delight, for she noticed that the autocratic young man was listening with uncomprehending eyes and a general expression of astonishment and mystification.

"Delightful!" Winnie whispered; "but it's not nearly so bad as what I have been enduring at the other end of the room, where an Englishman, who had been shooting big game in India, a college fellow just back from the Olympian Games, and a girl who had had her

first shopping experience in Paris, were all trying to outtalk each other—like this: 'And when you consider how Asiatic elephants do . . . shrink in the wash, you must have them made as full as . . . an eight-oared crew after a university race, and a good training table would only allow the men to eat . . . French clocks and Vienna bronzes, and a set of Sèvres porcelain, besides a few little bits of *bijouterie*, such as . . . crocodiles fully twenty feet long, and a royal Bengal tiger, the kind that . . . buttons on the side, and that is what I call a great reduction, almost equal to . . . the world's sprinting record . . . but at the Bon Marché they were selling the cunningest little . . . football players . . . by the gross for . . . two ostriches and a lioness; but I don't consider that a remarkable day's sport at all when you compare it with the . . . Prince of Wales' bag, which contained . . . the cheapest golf stockings . . . printed in those bright poster colors, and . . . luffing up with the wind before the cyclone struck them, and . . . dash in, Tib; I'm giving out; come to my rescue with some more of your talk. I'll tell you why by and by."

And Tib, not comprehending why Winnie wished it, but infected with her spirit of mischief, elaborated with great effect the absurd mixture, while Winnie kept up a running accompaniment of athletic slang, hunter's boasts, and shopping experiences.

"You have won," said the serious young man to the malicious girl. "I never heard such unadulterated, condensed nonsense in all my life. Those girls must be utter idiots. I did not think it possible that the human brain could be reduced to such hash."

The malicious girl smiled with serene satisfaction. "There is such a thing," she said to herself, "as being altogether too bright." She understood the situation, and was perfectly satisfied with the result.

CHAPTER II.

A CHILD'S DREAM OF VENICE.

"I LOVED her from my childhood; she to me
Was as a fairy-city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart."

BYRON.

TIB had dreamed all her life of Venice. The first books that she remembered reading of her own choice were a row of small volumes on the top shelf of the family secretary, entitled "British Poets," and these—Byron, Rogers, Shelley, Shakespeare—all wrote of Venice, and all made a deep impression on her imagination. She lived on a lonely Long Island farm. The yellow, sandy dunes on the landward side were

dreary and monotonous, but the little land-locked cove, where she was allowed to paddle about in an old tub of a boat, offered unlimited resources to the play of her fancy. To thoughtless onlookers it was only little Tib Smith, of Scup Haven, in her pink sunbonnet, rowing in and out among the seaweed-covered piles of a deserted and dilapidated wharf. They did not know that she had invented an amusement for herself of which she never tired ; that the grain elevator just visible in the distance, where the white houses ran down to the new steamboat landing, was for her the Venetian Campanile ; the lighthouse on the rocks, with its low dome, San Marco, and this row of a dozen decaying old posts, between which she loved to paddle, were the marble colonnades of the palaces on the Grand Canal. At the landward end of the wharf a few planks remained, roofing the piles and making a shelter under which the boat could be drawn up at night. In this cave Tib liked to sit, absorbed in her book, or watching the antics of the fiddler crabs on the sand at her feet, or the play of light on the vista of rich, dark posts stretching out before her, framing in their openings glimpses of blue sky and

bluer sea, crossed by an occasional white sail. But always, as she read or idly gazed, she "made believe" that the little cave in which she sat was a palace hall, and that she was looking out across the Venetian lagoons. Sometimes she acted monologues, in which she took the part of all the characters. The tragedy of the Foscari was her favorite; and she wept often over the old doge who was obliged to pass sentence of banishment on his own son, so unjustly found guilty of treason from admissions wrung from him in torture, and from the evidence of his enemy Loredano.

Sometimes she arranged the wedding procession of young Foscari with the daughter of the noble Contarini as it took place before his trouble fell on him; and chips laden with bell-shaped flowers represented gondolas bearing ladies, and were sent bobbing out on the retreating tide to dire disaster.

There was an old lobster crate which stood for the gloomy dungeons, approached by a Bridge of Sighs built of sand. In this she immured, by the order of an imaginary Council of Ten, countless fiddler crabs, each one supposed to be the unfortunate Jacopo Foscari.

But she always connived at their escape, and clapped her hands when a particularly lively prisoner scuttled out of his dungeon or, when sent to exile in a galley constructed from an old sardine box, the intrepid crab leaped overboard and, regardless of consequences, swam back to Venice.

One day a very remarkable thing happened. There was company at Captain Israel Snyder's house. Captain Israel was their nearest neighbor. He was owner as well as captain of his ship, and was seldom at home, for his wife had died long ago, and his daughter had accompanied her father on his voyages, and had been educated and married somewhere in "foreign parts." But Captain Snyder's old maid sisters lived in the comfortable house, and it was one of Tib's delights to call upon them and be shown the curiosities which the captain had brought back to them from his voyages. There were shells, and coral, and carved sandalwood boxes, and queer pictures on rice paper, and jars of preserved ginger, and boxes of Smyrna paste.

Lately the captain had resigned his position, and had, as he said, "lain by for repairs;" but he was an old man, and people shook their

heads when they quoted this statement. It was, therefore, a matter of interest not only to Tib but to the entire community when a quantity of luggage was deposited on the captain's veranda, and the news ran through the town that Captain Snyder's daughter had come to visit him. So much Tib had heard; but one day, as she was playing with her Foscari crabs, a handsome boy, about her own age, peeped down at her from the openings between the rotting planks of the old wharf. He wore a jersey striped broadly in dark blue and white, and topping his curly black locks was a crimson, purse-shaped cap.

"What are you playing there, little girl, all by yourself?" he asked in correct English, but with an odd accent.

"I am playing Venice," Tib replied shyly.

"May I come down and play too? I used to live in Venice, and I'm awfully lonesome."

Tib welcomed her unexpected guest, and he at once threw himself into the spirit of her play, tracing a plan of the city in the sand with her wooden shovel, and letting the water into the canals. Together they built palaces of oyster shells and bits of broken crockery, and an

old straw hat was mounted on four shingles to represent the dome of the Salute.

While the boy knew more of the topography of Venice, Tib was much better informed as to its history ; and day after day they found each other's society vastly entertaining. "My name is Lolo," he had said ; "that is the name they call me ; but my true name is Angelo Zanelli. What is yours ?"

"My real name is Nellie Smith, but my nickname is Tib. Father calls me Tibbety Tibbets."

"I don't like any of your names," Angelo replied frankly, "except Nellie. That is pretty, but it does not go well with your last name. Smith is hideous. It sounds like the locomotive letting off steam—S-s-s-*mith*. Don't you think it would be a great deal nicer if you had my name—Nellie Zanelli ? If you were my sister that is what your name would be. Don't you like it ?"

Tib confessed that she did think Nellie Zanelli more musical than Tib Smith.

"Then," said Angelo, "I am going to ask my mother if there is any way I can give you my name."

The next time they met Angelo was jubilant.

"I asked grandpa," Angelo said, "and at first he laughed, and then he said it could be managed very easily after we grow up, provided we both wish it then. And I will not have to take your name either. I thought I might have to be Tibbety Tibbets *Smith*—and I *would* have borne it for you, Nellie—but grandpa says that is not necessary. So now you must never, never forget that you are to be Nellie Zanelli. And you must not let any other boy give you his name, no matter how much prettier it may be."

This Tib readily promised, and every day that summer the playmates traced their mimic Venice in the sands, and Lolo gave her fascinating descriptions of the city itself. It seemed that he lived in a palace with a beautiful loggia with white marble tracery carved like lace. Lolo drew the pattern in the wet sand with the help of an old tin can, which he used as a sort of cake-cutter, stamping out the intersecting circles. He described the ball-room, too, with its ceiling frescoed with frolicsome nymphs and its many other lordly and sumptuous features; but his chief delight in this old palace was a suite of three small rooms which he had dis-

covered, and of whose existence he was sure no one else knew.

"There is a portrait in the ball-room," Lolo said, "a portrait of one of my ancestors holding a rapier half drawn from its sheath. I used to be very tired of seeing him eternally daring me to combat; and once, when my mother was away on a visit and I was in the room all alone, I said, 'Well, fight then, if you want to;' and I rushed at him with a stick which I had in my hand. But I stumbled and fell against the frame, and in doing so I moved a latch—for the picture was really a door—and it swung open just a little, and I easily pushed it wider, and there was a little narrow staircase leading down. So down I went, and found three funny little rooms with very little furniture. In the first room only an old bedstead stripped of its coverings, and a little cabinet with drawers and pigeon-holes stuffed with yellow, old letters and papers. The next room was very queer. It was like a kitchen, only not quite like one. It had a little furnace of brick-work, with a chimney, and strangely shaped kettles and pipkins, and a sink all blackened with slops that had been poured into it

and stained the marble ; and there was a shelf of vials of queer shapes, some with medicines in them and some empty. It was a fine place to play drug-store in, and I had rare sport afterward making up pills and pounding in a little mortar ; but I had sense enough not to take my medicines, or else I might have been poisoned."

"What a queer place!" Tib commented ; "perhaps it had been a doctor's office."

"That is what I thought," Angelo replied ; "and the third room, which had nothing in it at all but some rows of empty book-shelves, may have been the anteroom where his patients waited, for a little staircase led from this room down to a door which had once opened on a side street, but which was now walled up with stone. I asked my old nurse, Bianca, the next day, whether any one of my ancestors had been a doctor, and she said yes, there was one, but I must never ask my father about him, for he was a very bad man, and had perished miserably for his crimes, to the disgrace of our family. She would not tell me any more just then ; but another day we happened to be walking down the *calle* (I mean the little side street),

and I pointed out the door that had been walled up, and asked her what it meant. She crossed herself, and showed me a cross traced in the mortar, and said it had been closed by the order of the Holy Inquisition, which had burned my ancestor with the books taken from his own library because he was a wizard and a murderer, a maker of poisons and a killer of his patients by horrible means which he had learned in Eastern countries. This was so very dreadful that I determined not to speak to my father about it, for I knew that it would pain him. 'Does my mother know this?' I asked; and I was glad when Bianca said that she did not. I asked her why this side door had been walled up instead of the front door of our palace, and Bianca said that it had opened into the wizard's laboratory and library, which were formerly somewhere in the cellars under the house, but that they must have been filled up with earth, as, though they had been searched for, no such rooms could be found or any door or passageway on the inside of the house corresponding to the bricked doorway on the *calle*. Then I knew that I was the only one who knew the secret of the little rooms, and

that really they were not in the cellars, but between the main floor, where the grand apartments are, and the lower story, where the janitor lives. Bianca told me that the ghost of my wicked ancestor, a bent old man in a long black cloak, had been seen passing in and out of that walled-up door, walking right through the solid stone. But she made me promise never to tell a word of this to my mother or my father; and, indeed, I would not pain my dear mamma for worlds by telling her about this bad man. I used to hope that his ghost would come in some day while I was there. I would have asked whether it was really true that he had killed anybody on purpose—for, you know, he might have done it by mistake. I could not go down to the little rooms as often as I would have liked, for I did not want to be found out; but when mother had gone out for a trip to the Lido, and Bianca thought I had gone with her, I would have my chance of an hour or so among the bottles."

Angelo's story of the little rooms interested Tib greatly. "You must show them to me if I ever go to Venice," she said.

"*If* you go! Of course you *will* go," An-

gelo replied. "When you are Nellie Zanelli, you must come and live in Venice."

So all summer the children played together on the beach; but when autumn came, Captain Israel's daughter and grandson went back to Venice, and that winter Captain Israel Snyder sailed away on his long voyage to the undiscovered country, and Tib knew that Lolo would never come to Scup Haven again. Before he had gone he had given her a farewell present, a little silver box which he had found in the old cabinet in the little room. It was shaped like a snuff-box, but was smaller, and there was another exactly like it. They screwed together at the back and formed one box with two compartments. Each had the word Zanelli engraved upon the lid, and each contained small, glass-like globules, which might have been taken for beads but that they were not perforated. Lolo kept the box with the green balls, and gave Tib that containing amber ones.

"Don't eat them, they may be poison," the boy had said; "but if you ever forget what your name is going to be you can look at the lid of this box. See, I have scratched off the Za on my box, so it reads Nelli, and that means

you. I shall wait for you, Nellie, and I shall not give my name to any one else, for there is no one in the world I love so much."

And so her playmate faded out of her life; and though she never quite forgot him, Tib gradually gave up all expectation of ever seeing Lolo again. But she never relinquished the hope that some day she would see Venice. When spring came and she could return to her play on the beach she acted her little dramas again all by herself, as she had done before the coming of Lolo. One day her father followed her, and heard her repeating a monologue to herself:

> "There is a glorious city in the sea;
> The sea is in the broad and narrow streets,
> Ebbing and flowing, and the salt seaweed
> Clings to the marble of her palaces."

"Where are your palaces, little girl?" he called in his hearty way. "Acting a play all by your little lonesome? Guess you are too much by yourself, and we will have to send you to school."

But school only gave new food to her imagination. She studied every photograph and etching that came in her way, and listened later

to lectures by Professor Waite on Venetian history and Venetian art, and in the city exhibitions and at the picture-dealers' learned to know something of the marvellous Venetian coloring. It was always her hope, her ambition to some day see the wonderful city of her dreams, though the mirage faded farther and farther away as she grew older. She was an art student now, and had been in Europe, though it had never been possible for her to visit Italy; but at last this longed-for privilege had come to her, the dream of her life had come true, and Tib was in Venice. She had stepped into a strange hallucination when she took her seat in the gondola, when Winnie met her at her arrival at the railway station, and had drifted quite out of the reality of travel. She had lived an unreal, romantic life as a child—a life created by her own imagination. Now the romance was real, but it all seemed the glamour of a dream.

"It is impossible!" she kept repeating beneath her breath. "I shall wake up in a few moments. These palaces flitting by, these glimpses, up narrow canals, of bridges and balconies, and roses clambering over garden walls,

will all dissolve; but let me enjoy the illusion while it lasts." It was all so familiar and so satisfying! As the gondola, after many hair-breadth evasions of collision in the narrow, tortuous waterways, glided out upon the Grand Canal, she recognized the Rialto Bridge and many of the palaces. "That I should really see them," she murmured—"the palaces of Venice, with the quatrefoils over the arches in the loggias, just as Lolo used to cut them in the sand with the tomato-can!"

"Are you out of your mind?" Winnie asked.

"I do not wonder you think so," Tib replied; "but it is all so strangely familiar."

"Perhaps you lived here once in some previous state of existence," Winnie said jestingly.

"Yes, long ago, when I was a child," Tib replied, "I used to build mimic palaces, and fancy that I would live in a real one some day."

The gondola stopped gently in front of a flight of marble steps, and Tib, still dazed, gazed at the beautiful old building.

"Why, this is a palace," she said to Winnie. "What business have we here?"

"Yes," Winnie replied, "a palace let in floors, like an apartment house, and we have the best floor. We have all that lovely loggia, as they call the balcony, except the end, which is railed off in front of the door at the corner. Some one else has the right to use that part, and the door opens into a passage leading to the main hallway. But whoever this other tenant may be, I have not seen him yet, and we really have the entire beautiful balcony quite to ourselves."

The haunting feeling of familiarity explained itself to Tib when she entered the ball-room studio. It was such a house as this that had been Lolo's home, for there were the frescoed nymphs, "attributed to Giorgione," on the ceiling, and a row of ancestors' portraits on the wall. But of course there were a hundred such houses in Venice, and Lolo was probably now a very ordinary man.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST DAYS IN VENICE, AND ANOTHER LITTLE MISTAKE.

TO every traveller who has read much, even if he has had no such experience as Tib's, Venice at first view brings a certain strange, haunting sensation of familiarity. It is so satisfying, too, fulfilling and more than realizing all our preconceived ideas; a constantly increasing delight which does not diminish or pall on closer acquaintance; one of the few things that no one can overpraise—at least for the artist or for a mind sensitive to artistic and poetic influences.

The palace in which they had taken the state apartment kept its old traditions very well. There were no anachronisms of modern conveniences of any kind. Though there were other lodgers in the house, they rarely met them on the staircase, and never elsewhere. The girls' bedroom was paved with scagliola, a mosaic exactly like that on the floors of the Ducal Palace, which struck the foot with a chill shock at rising, and reminded Winnie perversely of slices of bologna sausage. Their windows, too, looked across all the shimmer and changing life of the canal to the dome of the Salute, a prospect of which they never wearied. There was a better view of the church from the balcony; and here Tib loved to sit with her travelling sketch-box in her lap, while she brushed in view after view of the church, getting a different effect with the varying lightings of sunset, or dawn, or midday; of white mist, or stormy cloud, or clear, azure sky. There were few American guests at the hotels at this season. It was growing too warm, and the tourists had flitted to the Italian lakes and the Tyrol; but Italians from the south of Italy, for whom Venice is a summer watering-place, had taken their

place, and the city was as full of sightseers and idlers as ever, while the regular inhabitants had adopted an out-of-door life and kept up a cheerful chatter in their musical tongue. There was much coming and going from the lagoon, where the sea breezes were fresh and cool. There was always a group of gondolas at the palace steps, tempting the ever-active Italians to wander; but Tib was so contented right there in this hang-bird's nest that it was long before she yielded to Winnie's suggestions of other delights to be explored. She had the balcony quite to herself. Others looked in for a moment and passed out again, but no one seemed to care as she did to ensconce herself there from breakfast until luncheon. There were signs that a gentleman found the end which had been reserved for other lodgers a favorite haunt in the very early morning, for there were always fresh cigar ashes on the table, an empty coffee-cup, and a volume of Ruskin, all of which a servant carried away later in the day. Tib had not noticed these indications, but nothing escaped Winnie's keen observation.

"It is rather odd that we never meet our friend the elderly English architect," she re-

marked. "He comes here so regularly for his morning coffee, his chapter of Ruskin, and his little smoke, that it would be natural for us to find him here some day. I wonder whether he has ascertained the hour that we usually take possession, and leaves designedly before we arrive. If so, he is either very shy or else considerate of us, and afraid of frightening us away. In either case, I like him for it."

"Yes," Tib replied absently, "it is very good of him. Who did you say he is?"

"I said the elderly English architect who in the morning monopolizes the end of the balcony which does not belong to us. There are always Italians there in the evening listening to the serenades and watching the effect of the moonlight and the reflections of the lanterns in the water; but our friend is the only one who is sufficiently 'matinal' to have discovered its charms at dawn. Young people do not like to get up early; therefore I argue that man has either passed the age of spending the night with the boys, or else he is a very serious young man. No, he cannot be young at all; no young man could resist these lovely Venetian nights. Sherlock Holmes has made it per-

fectly easy. We have only to open our eyes and judge from unmistakable indications."

"But why do you conclude that he is an Englishman and an architect?"

"Because his Ruskin is a London edition—that gives a clew as to the nationality; then he is moved to indignation at what Ruskin says against Renaissance architecture, and no one but an architect would have cared. He has probably studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, for the École is given over to the Renaissance. It is fun to see how he has marked all these passages and thrown in exclamation points and interrogation points, and such remarks as 'Absurd!' and 'Untrue,' and 'I wish some one would answer this,' in the margin."

"Do you think it quite fair to read written notes without permission?" Tib asked.

"I did not know, when I began to read, that there were any notes," Winnie replied. "I am sure Ruskin is public property. I opened the book to his quotation of Sir Walter Scott's description of scenery in the Trossachs, where he says:

"'Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.'

Ruskin quotes it to prove that the *Gothic* imagery, in the use of the word *spire*, is what gives beauty to the passage; and he argues that the corresponding term taken from classical architecture would not have been so poetic. 'Suppose,' he says, 'Sir Walter had written: "Each purple peak, each flinty pediment." Why would the poem be spoiled? Simply because those pediments and architraves never excited a single pleasurable feeling in you, and never will to the end of time.' This is what excites the ire of our old friend the architect. Evidently classical terms sound melodiously to his aged ear, and to him the image of a Greek temple is as beautiful as that of a Gothic cathedral. I can see him shaking his gray head vigorously. Some way I see signs of vigor as well as age; and I believe he has a perfect mane of iron-gray hair, and I sympathize with him, Tib. I like the Gothic palaces here in Venice; but, indeed, I think the classical ones have a great deal of dignity too. Now, look at the Salute over there. It is almost mountainous in outline. When the moonlight rested on

it last night it reminded me of the snowy dome of Mont Blanc. Of course not so immense, but majestic and pure; and when the sunset flushed it all rosy pink as we were drifting by the other evening, the façade rose above us like some sheer precipice—the cliffs of Dover, perhaps. Oh, I am sure that Renaissance architecture furnishes just the imagery with which to describe mountains in poetic language, and I believe Sir Walter could have done it.''

"Of course he could," Tib replied. "I am not Scott, but I believe I could do it," and she began to scribble on an old envelope. "Let me see—

> Its soaring columns carved in mist
> With tender flush of sunrise kissed.

No, it will be better to have it a moonlight effect. Ah! now I have it," and her fingers flew faster.

"Hurry, Tib, or, better, leave it for another time," said Winnie. "Here is Tribolo with his gondola, come to take us for our afternoon trip."

Tib dropped her poem and hastily packed up her sketch-box and followed Winnie.

"Well, what did you make out of the impossible stylobates and architraves?" Winnie asked an hour later.

"I don't quite remember. I must have dropped the paper in the canal," Tib replied. "It is of no consequence; I did not succeed very well."

But the "elderly English architect" (who, by the way, was neither elderly, nor an Englishman, nor an architect, but the young man who had listened to their nonsense that memorable Thursday), this mistaken and mistaking individual thought differently when, in the quiet of his own room, his servant handed him his volume of Ruskin, and he found the scribbled envelope between its leaves.

"What sentimental young person has been writing me poetry?" was his first remark. "Really, a very romantic proceeding to tuck it inside my favorite book, but forward, my dear, decidedly forward. Your governess should look after you better." And then he read the poem and elevated his eyebrows. "Not written to me exactly, after all, but in answer to my request that some one would show Ruskin that the Renaissance is as poetic as the Gothic.

Rather cleverly managed, too, but self-conscious. She must have felt that it was good, or she would not have offered it for my admiration. Yes, here is her name on the other side of the envelope—Miss Winifred De Witt, in a very manly hand, not hers. A pretty name—American probably, and I have pleasant memories of America, and have met many intelligent American girls, and some with lovely faces; but, unhappily, graces of mind and feature are not always found together. Now, if that girl with the Madonna face that I saw at the Waites' studio Thursday afternoon had been capable of writing something like this! But, instead, what a stream of idiotic maundering poured from those perfect lips! The woman who wrote this is probably a fright to look upon, and yet she must have had some appreciation of beauty both in art and nature."

Once more he read Tib's lines with pleasure:

> "Like some Greek temple pure and grave
> With pediment and architrave,
> And sculptured columns soaring high
> Against the solemn, starlit sky,
> The mountain with its dome of snow
> Lifted its perfect portico."

"The law of compensation is a cruel one," he thought. "Here is a mind with which I am in sympathy. She loves Renaissance architecture, and all her metaphors are correct. That argues cultured taste, education, travel. She expresses that taste in acceptable terms, which argues more education, and, alas! age, also a certain ability which comes from practice. She is doubtless an elderly penny-a-liner, and I shall recognize this poem some day in the pages of the *Ladies' Domestic Weekly*. This reasoning from circumstantial evidence, which Sherlock Holmes has reduced to an exact science, has its drawbacks: it effectually destroys all our illusions."

The young man's face was a pleasant one while those thoughts chased each other in his idle fancy; but suddenly a cloud crossed it, and he dashed the poem into a drawer of his desk, and set himself resolutely to some literary work upon which he had been engaged. "What business have I," he asked himself, "to indulge in foolish speculation about any woman—I who have such a heritage of disgrace that I can never marry, but who have sufficient consolation in the love of my mother and in

this absorbing work which I have set myself to do, for the sake of Venice—Venice whom I have made my only sweetheart, and whom I shall make to be known and loved by others as I love her?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE CLOSED DOOR—SKETCHING TRIPS—A GHOST.

WINNIE had at last succeeded in persuading Tib that ten different studies of the same view of the Salute were enough to give to that particular building, when all Venice still lay unexplored, and, with Adelaide as guide, they had visited the chief points of interest and had settled down to a daily gondola sketching trip. Their gondolier, Tribolo—so called, he told them, on account of his tribulations—had such a gentle, appealing look of melancholy that

they had not been able to resist, and they had engaged him for the season, though his prices were higher and his gondola older than those of the other gondoliers. As they were returning from one of their expeditions soon after this arrangement had been entered upon, Tribolo brought them back by way of a number of tortuous and narrow side canals. Just before they flashed into the sunshine of the Grand Canal they passed a gateway or doorway which had formerly opened upon a narrow sidewalk that ran along by the canal, but was now filled in with great blocks of rough stone. It was altogether a very picturesque bit, for there was a carved head on the keystone of the arch, and a vine from the neighboring garden had clambered over the wall and drooped over the stones, as though Nature, too, were striving to close the doorway. Tribolo rowed slowly, for he fancied that the girls might like to sketch the door some day; and Tib called to him to stop, and scrutinized it intently. But it was not because of its capabilities in suggesting a water-color. "Where have I seen a picture or read a description of this door?" she said reflectively; and then, turning to Tribolo, she asked, "Is

there any legend connected with the walling up of this door?"

"I do not know, signorita," the gondolier replied; "but I have heard others say that the place is haunted; that at night phantom gondolas arrive, and the ghosts pass right through the wall."

"Yes," Tib assented eagerly, "I have heard so too; but where?" A dip of the oar, and they turned the corner, and found themselves, to their surprise, in front of their own palazzo. "Why, it is our own house!" Tib exclaimed.

"I think not," Winnie replied. "Very likely it belongs to one of the buildings back of our palace. If it were a part of our house, we would have windows overlooking the garden."

They did not pass the door for many days after this, for the Grand Canal became for a time their favorite sketching ground. Every morning Tribolo would row them up its sweeping, S-shaped curve, stopping at some point of vantage opposite one of the older palaces, where they could sketch its lovely façade. Sometimes, when no opening side canal or sheltered corner could be found where she could make her drawing from the gondola, a window could

be hired for a few hours in some apartment placarded "To Let" opposite a coveted view, and so her set of palace fronts grew every day more complete.

While thus engaged, Winnie would read aloud from guide-books and histories the stories of the old buildings which Tib drew, so that they had a fair idea of the dates when they were built, of their different styles of architecture, and of the histories of the different families who had occupied them.

They found that even so far back as 1495 the Grand Canal had deserved its name. Philippe de Comynes, at that time the French ambassador, thus chronicled his impressions:

"They led me along the Canal Grant, which is very large. Galleys pass through it, and one sees ships of four hundred tons' burden near the houses. And I believe it to be the most beautiful street in all the world, and the best built, and goes the length of the city. The houses are very large and high, of good stone, and the ancient ones are all painted; the others, made since a hundred years, have the fronts in white marble which comes from Istria. It is the most triumphant city that I have seen,

and the most wisely governed, and where the service of God is most solemnly rendered."

If Comynes could thus praise the Canal in his time, it has grown even more beautiful since a third style, that of the Renaissance, has sprung up amid the palaces of the Byzantine period and the pure, fanciful Gothic ("the point-lace of architecture").

These three orders, the Byzantine or Arab, the Lombard or Gothic, and the Classical or Renaissance, mingle in the Ducal Palace. It is, as Ruskin calls it, "the central building of the world." On the Grand Canal, however, they are to be traced distinctly in each separate, perfect palace, each beautiful after its own kind.

The girls' favorite course, when they wished simply to make a gondola trip for the sake of the enjoyment of the *ensemble*, was from their own hotel to the Palazzo Vendramin, near the railroad station. It was the path by which they had entered Venice, the trip taken by the most hurried of tourists, and the one which of all others gives most of beauty and interest at every dip of the oar. Hopkinson Smith, with his sensitive artist's eye and the skilled

touch of a word painter, has best described it:

"Nowhere else in the wide world is there such a sight—a double row of creamy white palaces tiled in red and topped with quaint chimneys; overhanging balconies of marble, fringed with flowers, with gay awnings above and streaming shadows below; two lines of narrow quays crowded with people flashing bright bits of color in the blazing sun; swarms of gondolas, barcos, and lesser water-spiders darting in and out; lazy red-sailed luggers, melon-loaded, with crinkled green shadows crawling beneath their bows, while at the far end, over the glistening highway, beaded with people, curves the beautiful bridge—an ivory arch against a turquoise sky."

Our young artists never tired of this beautiful panorama, and agreed that the reproduction of its beauties gave opportunity for as many centuries of art work as had been required for their creation. They studied the buildings from a historical point of view, first visiting and sketching the few older and more ruinous palaces, and finding them picturesque and colorful in their decay. While the later buildings

could receive ample justice from black and white drawings, and even from photographs, the charm of these ancient palaces could only be painted, for the chief characteristic of the Byzantine architecture, like that of the Orient from which it is derived, is color. The exteriors of these houses had been ornamented with tiles and with columns of colored marbles.

With Ruskin as a guide, the girls discovered a group of old Byzantine palaces near the Rialto mentioned in his Appendix to the "Stones of Venice." All of these Byzantine palaces were formerly encrusted with mosaics. Their columns were generally purple porphyry or of green serpentine, and in their wealth of color they presented a contrast to the white marble of the Gothic and the Renaissance period. It was of these Byzantine palaces that Rogers wrote:

> "By many a pile in more than Eastern pride,
> Of old the residence of merchant kings,
> The fronts of some, though time had shattered them,
> Still glowing with the richest hues of art."

Very sad is the present condition of some of them, not unlike that of the Fondaco dei Turchi when Ruskin saw it. Ruskin's description of

this famous building, which in the tenth century was the warehouse and exchange of Turkish merchants, seemed to the girls the most eloquent word picture they had ever seen of the degradation of ruined grandeur:

"It is a ghastly ruin, whatever is venerable and sad in its wreck being disguised by attempts to put it to present uses of the basest kind. The covering stones have been torn away like the shroud from a corpse, and its walls, rent into a thousand chasms, are filled and refilled with fresh brick-work, and the seams and hollows choked with clay, and whitewash oozing and trickling over the marble. Soft grasses and wandering leafage have rooted themselves in the rents, but they are not suffered to grow in their own wild and gentle way, for the place is in some sort inhabited: rotten partitions are nailed across its corridors, and here and there the weeds are indolently torn down, leaving their haggard fibres to struggle again into unwholesome growth when the spring next stirs them."

It was while Tib was making a water-color study of the interior court of just such a dilapidated Byzantine palace that she was aware of

the presence of a restless young man, who darted in and out of the doorway, ran up and down the staircases, and thrust his head now over one balcony and now through an arch, evidently seeking a good point of view from which to photograph the very bit which she was sketching. He carried his easel from spot to spot, but at length attempted to set it up behind Tib and to take the view from over her head. Seeing that her camp-stool had been placed too near the wall to give him sufficient room, Tib obligingly moved aside, or attempted to do so; but the young man, in an agony of polite remonstrance, held her easel in place, assuring her that it did not discommode him in the least.

In his nervousness he first took a photograph of the easel, and when Tib assured him that this must be the case, he tried again.

"I am sure that is perfect," he said gratefully; "two heads are better than one," and then he recognized the Madonna face. In his agitation he overturned her sketch-box, and with a wild dash for the scattered tubes, bumped his head against hers.

"Oh! are they?" Tib replied merrily; and then checked her laughter as she saw that the

shock had opened the shutter of his camera and ruined the negative just taken.

A dogged look of determination had settled upon the young man's countenance. He would not be embarrassed by this foolish girl simply because she had a beautiful face, and he proceeded to deliberately take two carefully timed photographs, and only discovered, when he developed them, that they were both on the same plate, and his only success of the morning was a capital negative of Tib's easel.

"Decidedly," he said to himself, "I prefer the literary genius who keeps out of sight to this pretty girl, who is always appropriating to herself the most desirable situations and getting in the way with miserable sloppy water-colors, and otherwise discomposing serious workers."

By which observation it will be seen that their paths had crossed before, and with discomfiture to the young amateur photographer. Winnie had been conscious of this; for several days past she had noticed the photographic outfit in the different Byzantine palaces where they had gone to sketch. The owner had evidently either been photographing there or had

sent his apparatus on in advance. Why was it that until now the photographer himself had not appeared upon the scene? On thinking it over, she had noticed an opening of doors, a mysterious bobbing in and out of a head, footsteps coming and going. Such avoidance must be intentional; he had found the ground occupied and had retired, until grown desperate of ever being able to achieve his own wishes, he had endeavored boldly but unsuccessfully to photograph the view which Tib was painting.

"Where have we ever seen this young man?" she asked of Tib. "His face is familiar, and yet I cannot remember where we have met him."

"I remember," Tib replied; "while we were amusing ourselves with trying to reproduce the chatter of an afternoon tea at the first of Adelaide's receptions which we attended, he was standing by the piano looking over the music."

"Of course; with that malicious-looking girl."

"I did not notice the girl, but I remember thinking at the time that he would have been handsome if he had not looked so angry. It

was a strange look to have on one's face at a tea."

"He was angry at our talk, Tib."

"I would be very much mortified if I thought that he had heard it."

"But he did, and misunderstood it deliciously. He thinks us a couple of rattle-tongued idiots; and it serves him right for being so slow of comprehension. *I* never enjoyed anything more in my life."

"Winnie, is it possible that you ran on and let me disgrace myself in that way, knowing that this young man heard what we were saying?"

"Certainly; but he brought it on himself. I heard him tell the malicious girl that he intended to form an estimate of your mind by your next remark. I hope he found it comprehensive enough. Now, don't spoil the joke by explaining everything the next time you see him."

A deep red spot burned on Tib's cheek. "Explain! I never desire to see him again."

"I do," said Winnie to herself; "and if I do I will give him more food for reflection. He is better than a circus."

They stopped at Professor Waite's studio on their return that day, and he criticised their work.

"Why have you confined yourselves to the Byzantine palaces?" he asked. "There is some such lovely tracery in the Gothic arcades."

"We are coming to them," Tib replied, "but we want to take them chronologically. We are very much interested in Venetian history, and we are reading now about the Fourth Crusade."

"That is odd, very odd," replied the professor. "I have a friend who is writing a book on the palaces of Venice; he is treating them chronologically, too, and has promised to read his chapter on the Byzantine period to our friends next Thursday afternoon."

"We will surely be here," said Tib. "It will be a privilege to have some one direct our studies."

"Yes, he is an interesting man; and I want you to leave this water-color with me, for he was asking me the other day if I could recommend some artist who would assist him in illustrating the work. And bring pen-and-ink drawings of some of the Gothic tracery; they

will be just what he will want for the next chapters. You may have seen my friend, for he lives in this house and occasionally sits on the balcony."

"Is he particularly fond of Renaissance architecture?" Winnie asked.

"Of all good styles; and now I think of it, he did say that he had been made especially indignant by Ruskin's injustice to the Renaissance. He said, too, that he was so fond of the sunrise over the Salute that he never missed seeing it."

"I was sure of it. It is our friend," Winnie exclaimed enthusiastically.

"Then you have already met him?"

"Not exactly; but we know him all the same—a venerable man with gray hair and beard, with some such name as Hobbes or Dobson. I see by your smile that I am right."

Tib was not so sure, for the professor's smile was quizzical as he said: "Be sure to be on hand early next Thursday, and you shall see for yourself how nearly you have guessed."

A few evenings later a very odd thing happened. The girls were returning with Professor Waite from a *festa* at San Marco; the piazza

had been illuminated, and it was a wonderful sight to see every outline of the architecture traced in little jets of flame. It was a moonlight night, and as they slipped homeward through the side canals, objects on the lighted side were vividly distinct while the shadows opposite were inky black. Tib was watching the Rembrandtesque effects with keen delight when she was awakened from her reverie by the professor giving an order to Tribolo.

"You know the little *calle* by the side of our palazzo?"

"Yes, signor, the Calle del Espirito. No one takes it at night, for it is haunted."

"Nonsense; it is the nearest way home; and see, there is a gondola ahead of us turning into it. You need have no fear, for we have company."

The *felza* or cloth top of the leading gondola had been removed, for the night was warm, and they could see that it had a single occupant, a man in a black cloak. The gondola kept steadily in front of them until it came in front of the walled-up door, when it paused in the shadow. Tribolo slackened his speed and all watched. Suddenly the gondola shot out

into the brilliantly lighted Grand Canal, and they saw that the man had vanished.

"He went in at that door!" Tib exclaimed.

"Impossible," Winnie replied. "We saw when we last passed here that it was walled up."

Tribolo was trembling so that he could scarcely guide the gondola. "Si, signorita," he said. "I told you, it is the spirit."

CHAPTER V.

ONE HOUR OF BLIND OLD DANDOLO.

IN this temple-porch,
Old as he was, so near his hundredth year,
And blind—his eyes put out—did Dandolo
Stand forth, displaying on his crown the cross.
There did he stand erect, invincible,
Though wan his cheeks and wet with many tears,
For in his prayers he had been weeping much;
And now the pilgrims and the people wept
With admiration, saying in their hearts,
'Surely those aged limbs have need of rest!'
There did he stand with his old armor on,
Ere, gonfalon in hand that streamed aloft,
As conscious of his glorious destiny,
So soon to float o'er mosque and minaret,

He sailed away, five hundred gallant ships,
Their lofty sides hung with emblazoned shields,
Following his track to fame. He went to die;
But of his trophies four arrived erelong,
Snatched from destruction—the four steeds divine,
That strike the ground resounding with their feet,
And from their nostrils snort ethereal flame
Over that very porch."

ROGERS.

THE next afternoon, as Winnie and Tib were returning from their sketching earlier than usual, in order to be in time for Adelaide's reception, they were greeted by a hearty shout from an approaching gondola.

It was John Nash, Stacey Fitz-Simmons's friend and *protégé*, who had decided to return to America by way of Italy.

"You must come with us," Winnie urged, after the first greetings. "Adelaide will be glad to welcome you to Venice."

"Nothing would please me better than to see Professor and Mrs. Waite, whom I have not met since the summer the professor had his studio in the windmill at Shinnecock; but you know I am as out of place at a reception as Noah's ark would be among these gondolas."

But John's objections were quickly over-

ruled, and he allowed himself to be taken a willing captive.

"I say," he exclaimed, in admiration, as they approached the palace, "you don't mean to tell me that the Waites live there! It must cost them a fortune."

"They and we have the second floor together," Winnie replied—"the suite with that arcade of beautiful traceried windows. The house resembles the Ca' d'Oro, and the apartments on the second story are more lofty than either of the others."

"That is odd," John replied, "for I should say, judging from the outside, that the height of the first and second floors was precisely the same."

"Oh, no," Winnie replied positively; "I have been inside the janitor's apartment on the water-level, and it is not nearly so high studded as Adelaide's. You are right, though, about the effect from the exterior. The only explanation is that there must be a little mezzanine story; but as many times as I have been here I have never noticed any landing or doors opening on the staircase until we reach Adelaide's apartment."

They stood within the high entrance hall now, and could see that Winnie was correct; the staircase led straight up, without a stop or turn, to the level of the rooms occupied by the Waites.

"The mezzanine may have a staircase of its own communicating with an entrance at the side or back of the house," Tib suggested; "or it may be arranged like our duplex flats in America, and be approached by a staircase leading down from Adelaide's suite, or upward from the janitor's."

"That seems sensible," Winnie remarked; "but how clever of you to have guessed at that explanation!"

"I did not guess," Tib replied. "I seem to remember to have read somewhere that Venetian houses were arranged in that way."

"It will be very easy to satisfy our curiosity," said Winnie. "There is the janitor; I am going to ask him."

The janitor, however, declared that he knew nothing of any intermediate story He occupied the lower floor, and had gone over Professor Waite's apartment many times when it was vacant; there was no mezzanine floor. But the

girls were not satisfied ; and after the man had retired into his den, John said : "I noticed, in the glimpse which I just had into that room, that not only was it much lower than this entrance hall, but that the windows on the canal ran up to and apparently beyond the ceiling, for they had square mouldings across the top, while on the outside they are much taller and are arched."

"Might not the arches over the top be simply an ornamental feature of the façade?" Winnie asked.

"No," Tib replied ; "there are rooms behind those arches, for I have several times of late seen a man seated within one of the arches. He seems to use the room as a sort of workshop. Yes, I am positive now that he was printing photographs at the window, for I saw him distinctly enough to recognize him, and it was the young photographer who had such a time in the courtyard where we were sketching."

"Then the janitor lied ; and yet he had the most innocent expression."

"Perhaps he does not know of the existence of these rooms," said Tib ; and her voice had a

mechanical sound, as though she were reading something from a book. "It may be a secret chamber."

Winnie laughed heartily. "Secret fiddlesticks, Tib. You are as absurd now as you were clever before. Whatever put such a romantic idea into your head? You must have been reading the 'Mysteries of Udolfo.'"

Tib blushed; she was usually very practical and unimaginative, and she was puzzled as to what could have suggested such a fancy, and quite ashamed of it.

"It *is* a mystery, all the same," said John Nash; "but Miss Smith's suggestion that the rooms may communicate with Mrs. Waite's is still to be investigated. She may be able to explain everything."

"That is true," Winnie assented, "for the young man that Tib speaks of was at one of her receptions."

Adelaide greeted them, on their entrance, with an eager "The contessa is here; let me present you." Then she recognized John Nash, welcomed him cordially, and handed him over to her husband, and led the girls toward the studio.

"Who is the contessa?" Winnie asked.

"She is the owner of this palazzo. She lives in the upper story and rents the more desirable apartments. She is charming—just what a contessa should be."

"If she is the owner of this house, perhaps she or you can settle a question which is troubling us very much at present. Is there or is there not a suite of rooms between your own and the janitor's floor?"

"I can settle that; there is no such suite, I am positive."

"And no trace of any other staircase or entrance to the house than the one on the Grand Canal?"

"Of that I am not so sure. I only know that our apartment, which occupies this entire floor, opens on no other staircase. The contessa will tell you."

"I shall never be able to muster up courage to speak to her," said Tib, "my Italian is so poor."

"But Contessa Zanelli speaks English," Adelaide replied, presenting Tib to a motherly lady with beautiful white hair, who greeted her in such perfect English that Winnie exclaimed in surprise.

"It is little wonder," the contessa replied with a smile, "since it is my native language. I am an American, and though I have not returned to the States but once since my marriage, I am proud of my country, and am glad to meet Americans. I have been so glad to have my son know Professor and Mrs. Waite, for hitherto the American women whom he has met have not been of the serious type which I most admire. We see plenty of beautiful girls, rich, aristocratic, gay, and even brilliant socially, but few earnest students, and my son is, first of all, a student."

Tib listened in a dazed way. She had forgotten to ask about the mysterious mezzanine apartment; she knew now why it had seemed quite natural to her that there should be such a secret chamber or suite of chambers—the revelation had come with Adelaide's mention of the name Zanelli. This was Lolo's mother, this Lolo's home, with its queer little suite of rooms which he had discovered, and of which no one else knew. And Lolo himself—where was he? The contessa was speaking now in reply to Winnie's praise of Venice. "All Venetians love Venice intensely. My son has seen the princi-

pal cities of Europe, but none of them, for him, is so interesting or so lovely as his native city. His love for her from boyhood has been a passion. When a child I took him with me to America, and he said to me one day, 'Mamma, I can understand just how Jacopo Foscari felt when he came back to Venice, after he was exiled, at the risk of his life. I feel as if I could jump into the ocean and swim all the way to Venice.' I do not know where he learned the story of Foscari—not from me certainly; but it made a great impression on him."

Tib felt like exclaiming: "It was I who told Lolo about the Foscari." She remembered how gayly they would applaud the fiddler crabs as they swam back to shore, and she was filled with a great longing to see her little playfellow and to talk with him about the old days. Winnie wondered that Tib was so silent; but the contessa chatted blandly on, with all a mother's sublime confidence that her son must be the most interesting subject of conversation to the world at large.

"Angelo is writing a book on Venice, and Professor Waite has asked him to read one of

the chapters here this afternoon. He has had an idea that he can best tell the history of the city and the people by relating the stories of the houses. He has been taking photographs of the old palaces with which to illustrate his book. Ah! here he is."

There was a little flutter of people settling into chairs, for Professor Waite had announced the reading. Tib sank upon the divan beside the contessa, but did not look up. She had a feeling which she knew would be disappointed, that her boy friend Lolo was standing there in his blue-and-white jersey and the crimson purse-shaped cap. Winnie gave a surprised gasp and whispered: "It isn't the elderly English architect after all, Tib. Look, it is that very superior young man whom we intrigued so successfully with our composite chatter, and who was so embarrassed with his photography in the old palace."

Tib looked up. The young man was not embarrassed now. His face had a sad expression, but lighted with enthusiasm as he warmed to his subject. He described the birth of Venice —at first only a seabird's nest among the lagoons and a home for the fishermen of Padua;

then, as Attila swept down upon Northern Italy in 452, a refuge from the Huns, and a century later from Alboin and his Lombards. He told how those two invasions decided the fugitives to make of their hiding-place a permanent home, and they returned no more to their ruined cities except to gather from their former homes such precious marbles and columns which the spoiler had left behind; and these, in love and reverence for their associations, they built first into their churches and afterward into their homes. The people of Altino had settled upon one of the islands, which, in memory of the towers of their ancient home, they named Torcello, and their church was the first which was so decorated. This church was taken down in the tenth century, when the patriarch Orso, of noble and touching history, built the cathedral which still stands on the lonely island; but the marbles brought from Altino were again carefully built into its walls, and may be seen to-day. Such was the first and noblest Venice—a cluster of villages, straggling along the sides of each muddy, marshy island—no columns on the Piazzetta, and the great Piazza a piece of waste land. But already

the lagoon was full of boats, and Venice grew like a young plant, like the quick-spreading vegetation of her own warm, wet marshes, day by day.

"A few in fear
Flying away from him whose boast it was
That the grass grew not where his horse had trod,
Gave birth to Venice. Like the waterfowl,
They built their nests among the ocean waves;
And where the sands were shifting, as the wind
Blew from the north or south—where they that came
Had to make sure the ground they stood upon,
Rose, like an exhalation from the deep,
A vast metropolis, with glistening spires,
With theatres, basilicas, adorned;
A scene of light and glory, a dominion
That has endured the longest among men."

"Do you ask me," said the speaker, "how from the simple homes of these pioneer refugees there was soon developed one of the most beautiful styles of architecture, the most luxurious, costly, and perfect in its satisfying of artistic requirements, that the world has known? how it happened that this style blossomed immediately into perfection, and that with the first financial success of the city there appeared, instead of the tasteless gropings after pretentious display of a people newly rich, that ex-

quisite and 'fairest Venice, a city of graceful arcades and gleaming walls veined with azure and warm with gold, and fretted with white sculpture, like frost upon forest branches'? I reply that this beauty had a double origin, and sprang both from honor and dishonor. The Byzantine style, as its name suggests, was not invented in Venice, but borrowed fully developed from the East. The great peculiarity and beauty of Oriental architecture in distinction from all other architecture is its abundant use of glowing color. Venetian travellers had seen the Eastern buildings, and were taken captive by their beauty. As Ruskin has written, 'the Venetians deserve especial note as the only European people who appear to have sympathized to the full with the great (color) instinct of the Eastern races. They, indeed, were compelled to bring artists from Constantinople to design the mosaics of St. Mark's; but they rapidly developed the system, and while the burghers and barons of the North were building their dark streets and grisly castles of oak and sandstones, the merchants of Venice were covering their palaces with porphyry and gold.' But there was another and more practical reason

why Venice adopted this style. All stone had to be brought from a distance, while brick could be manufactured at hand. It was easier to build the cathedral in its mass of brick, and then to encrust it with thin layers of precious marbles, and adorn it first with pillars and sculpture which they had brought from the ruins of the cities from which their forefathers had been exiled, and later which their merchant ships brought back from foreign ports, than to transport from inland quarries huge blocks of coarser building stone in such quantity as would be needed to build so large an edifice as St. Mark's. So the cathedral of San Marco was built and was consecrated in the eleventh century in the dogeship of Vital Falier, and Venice may well love and be proud of San Marco. Walk through the Piazza, whose arches, as Ruskin has said, seem struck back, leaving the great square open in a kind of awe, and look upon that vision which he so well describes: 'A multitude of pillars and white domes clustered into a long, low pyramid of colored light; a treasure heap it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted

porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster clear as amber and delicate as ivory, sculpture, fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and in the midst of it the solemn forms of angels sceptred and robed to the feet and leaning to each other across the gates. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, their bluest veins to kiss; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life, and above these another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers—a confusion of delight, amid which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's lion lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam and toss themselves far into

the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frostbound before they fell and the sea nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.' Alas! the beauty which the great word painter describes is not all of that early and innocent period. We had become accustomed to build from ruins, to inserting older fragments into modern buildings, and Ruskin, with all his admiration, does not gloss the truth. The practice which began in the affections of a fugitive nation was prolonged in the pride of a conquering one; and beside the memorials of departed happiness were elevated the trophies of returning victory. The ship of war brought home more marble in triumph than the merchant vessel in speculation, and the front of St. Mark's became rather a shrine at which to dedicate the splendor of miscellaneous spoil than the organized expression of any fixed architectural law or religious emotion! And not the cathedral alone, for if the Crusaders could satisfy their consciences with the plea that they were stripping the infidel for the glory of the Church, it was but a step farther to carry the excuse for such robbery to the enrichment of

"'the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars and whose costly fronts
Fraught with Orient spoils of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the Grand Canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed.'

"Seem, did I say?" said the speaker; "nay, are; for these Byzantine palaces, as well as the noble columns of the Piazza and the bronze horses above the portals of San Marco, were direct trophies of the Fourth Crusade, which had its inception in high and holy enthusiasm, and was adorned by many a deed of valor and self-sacrifice, devotion to religion and to country, but which, alas! though these high motives led at the outset, degenerated, through the very desire of enriching and beautifying Venice, into a mere piratical expedition, so that these beautiful monuments witness forever to her shame as well as her glory. Better that these beautiful statues, pillars, mosaics, had remained in Constantinople to decorate the harems and mosques of the infidel, rather than, as spoils of robbers, flaunt their beauty in our till then simple city, and introducing the Saracen style of architecture, bring with it cus-

toms of luxury, arts, and learning banned by the Christian Church, and hitherto undreamed of by our people."

With a quick movement of his hand he threw back a long lock of black hair which had drooped over his forehead, shadowing it as he murmured the last words, and told with pride how the six French knights came to Venice as messengers of the Crusaders to arrange for the transportation of the army by sea to the Holy Land—for Venice was the carrying power of the world, and the expedition needed her ships. He read Geoffroy de Villehardouin's own account of the address which he made when bidden by the Doge Enrico Dandolo to speak for the knights to the people assembled in the church of St. Mark's.

"'Messieurs,' said the French knight, 'the noblest and most powerful barons of France have sent us to you to pray you to have pity upon Jerusalem, in bondage to the Turk, and for the love of God to accompany us to avenge the shame of Christ; and knowing that no nation is so powerful on the seas as you, they have charged us to implore your aid, and not to rise from our knees till you have con-

sented to have pity upon the Holy Land.' With this, the six ambassadors knelt down weeping. The doge and all the people then cried out with one voice, raising their hands to heaven, 'We grant it, we grant it!' And so great was the sound that nothing ever equalled it."

Venice had pledged to provide transport for four thousand five hundred cavaliers and thirty thousand footmen, with provisions for a year, for which the Frenchmen were to pay well and to send out a fleet of her own of fifty galleys. This was in the winter of 1201; it was nearly a year later when the expedition arrived in Venice, and then the knights found that they had promised to pay the Venetians more than they could raise. The Venetians proposed that in lieu of the full price they should pause on their way and subdue Zara, which had rebelled against their rule. This was all that was intended at that time, for many of the Venetians had become Crusaders and were as eager as the French knights to rescue the Holy Sepulchre, while a stroke for their country on the way was not inconsistent with this high enthusiasm.

Angelo Zanelli read on from the quaint chronicle.

"'One day, upon a Sunday, all the people of the city, and the greater part of the barons and pilgrims, met in San Marco. Before the Mass began the doge rose in the pulpit and spoke to the people in this manner: "Signori, you are associated with the greatest nation in the world in the most important matter which can be undertaken by men. I am old and weak and need rest; but I perceive that none can so well guide and govern you as I, who am your lord. If you will consent that I should take the sign of the cross for you and direct you, and that my son should, in my stead, regulate the affairs of the city, I will go to live and die with you and the pilgrims."

"'When they heard this, they cried with one voice, "Yes, we pray you, in the name of God, take it and come with us."

"'Then the people of the country and the pilgrims were greatly moved, and shed many tears because this heroic man had so many reasons for remaining at home, being old. But he was strong and of a great heart. He then descended from the pulpit and knelt before the

altar weeping, and the cross was sewn upon the front of his great cap, so that all might see it. And the Venetians that day in great numbers took the cross.' "

Closing the book, Count Zanelli told how the fleet sailed in October, how Zara succumbed, and how, while the Crusaders were in the city, the young Prince Alexis, son of the dethroned Emperor of the Greeks, came to beg them to restore him to Constantinople, where his father lay imprisoned by an unnatural son who had usurped the throne. The purpose of the Crusade was deflected still more, for the fleet sailed at once for Constantinople.

This was Dandolo's hour. Apart from any enthusiasm which he may have felt for the little prince, he could not have failed to recognize the great advantage it would be to Venice to lay a masterful hand on Constantinople and dictate terms to the empire of the East. The count described Dandolo's heroic bearing in the siege in Gibbon's admiring words :

" ' In the midst of the conflict the doge's venerable and conspicuous form stood aloft in complete armor in the prow of his galley. The great standard of St. Mark was displayed be-

fore him ; his vessel was the first that struck ; and Dandolo was the first warrior on shore. The nations admired the magnanimity of the blind old man' (the Venetian chronicle says only 'infirm of vision'). 'On a sudden, by an invisible hand, the banner of the republic was fixed on the rampart, twenty-five towers were rapidly occupied, and by the cruel expedient of fire the Greeks were driven from the adjacent quarter.'

"From this point," said the count, "the glory ends, and the entanglement of mixed motives, sordid desires, and base personal ambitions began. In midsummer, 1203, Constantinople was taken and the old king liberated ; but it presently transpired that his kingdom did not desire him or his younger son. He begged the Crusaders to remain to strengthen his rule, but in spite of their presence in the Bosphorus a revolution took place in the city, the young prince was murdered, and his father died of grief. Then the Crusaders besieged the city again and put it to the sword with terrible slaughter. 'The Venetians only, who were of gentler soul,' says Romanin, 'took thought for the preservation of those marvellous works of

human genius, transporting them afterward to Venice, as they did the four famous horses which now stand on the façade of the great Basilica, along with many columns, jewels, and precious stones, with which they decorated the Pala d'Oro and the treasury of San Marco.'

"'This proof of gentler soul was equally demonstrated,' Mrs. Oliphant remarks, 'by Napoleon when he carried off those same bronze horses to Paris in the beginning of the century, but it was not appreciated by Italy.'

"And what of Dandolo and the Crusaders, do you ask, after the taking of Constantinople? Alas! the original aim of the expedition seems to have been forgotten. Only a few of the knights, true to their first purpose, straggled on in little bands to Palestine; the others elected Baldwin of Flanders emperor of the East, and themselves lords and suzerains under him. Venice received large possessions in the East and a long list of Mediterranean islands. She was ready now to marry the sea. But Dandolo, who had dowered her with glory, with wealth, with beauty, and, alas! with the shame of pillage, died in Constantinople and was buried with kingly honors in St. Sophia. Bet-

ter for Venice if he had given her alone the memory of his valor directed to a single purpose, the service of the cross, with no thought of gain even for his country or the Church. Better for the honor of our city if there had been no 'trophies of his mighty deeds,' 'fraught with Orient spoils of many marbles,' no Byzantine palaces in Venice."

The speaker ceased, and for a moment a hush fell on his audience. Every one felt his earnestness and recognized that here was a son of Venice who loved her too intensely to be gentle with her faults. She must be perfect, this Venice of his adoration, all glorious within.

To Tib there seemed in his sadness something very personal, as though he had some particular cause to regret the Eastern conquests which gave to Venice so much glory in the eyes of an unreflecting world. Some ancestor of his must have taken part in this glory and shame, but not certainly in the robbery of Saracenic buildings of their ornaments, for the Palazzo Zanelli was built in a later period and in the Gothic style. Suddenly there crossed her mind the memory of the bad man, the alchemist of

whom Lolo had told her, who had practised his black art in the laboratory of the secret apartments, and had been carried from it to ignominious death.

Perhaps the count referred to him when he spoke of "learning banned by the Christian Church." She was not disappointed in the development of her old playmate. He had fulfilled the promise of his childhood, and was the same thoughtful, gentle spirit. Tib felt as if they might easily take up the old friendship, for they had each grown on parallel lines, and yet with this conviction of sympathy there came to her a strange feeling of shyness, a morbid shrinking from obtruding herself on his attention.

She came out of her day-dream of the past to hear a buzz of conversation about her. John Nash was very enthusiastic. He was delighted with the essay and wished to ask a hundred questions of the essayist.

"I shall look up all these Byzantine houses," he said; "and I am filled with a great longing to see the real Saracenic architecture which inspired them. To do that I suppose I ought to go to India, which is impossible. I cannot even

afford to continue my trip to Constantinople and Cairo."

"You might go home by way of Spain and see the mosque at Cordova and the Alhambra," Winnie suggested, "with the other beautiful examples of Arabian architecture at Seville. You have enough for a season's study in the cathedral of San Marco here. It is the noblest specimen of Byzantine architecture I know of, and not, as many suppose, a copy of St. Sophia at Constantinople, but in many respects very different."

Professor Waite had joined the count on the conclusion of his reading to thank and congratulate him. "By the way," he remarked, "I want you to meet some friends of ours—two young ladies, artists, who are much interested in the palaces of Venice, and are making studies of them. I have here some of their water-colors of bits of the older houses which I would like to show you."

To the professor's surprise, the count, usually courteous, grew frigid. "Excuse me, my dear sir; but if you refer to the two young ladies sitting near my mother, do not trouble yourself to present me. I have already met them in a

certain way ; and (forgive my rudeness) I have not time now to cultivate new acquaintances, nor am I greatly interested in the amateur efforts of artistic young ladies."

Others pressed up to meet the count, and the professor, nonplussed and displeased, had no opportunity to say more. As Tib was leaving, she handed him a package.

" Here are some pen-and-ink drawings," she said, " which I have been making of the Gothic palaces. I shall bring you more, and shall be very proud if your friend thinks them worthy to illustrate his book. Make any arrangement with him you see fit, but please let me be anonymous. I would rather he should not know the name of his illustrator."

The professor, who had been slightly embarrassed, was much relieved. " Good !" he exclaimed, " let the drawings be accepted or rejected on their merits alone. My friend, who is otherwise unprejudiced, has a strange incredulity as to the ability of women in art. It will be quite a triumph ; and I shall enjoy his discomfiture when he ascertains that these drawings have been made by a young girl. It may be an assistance in keeping up the incog-

nito if I do not introduce him to you this afternoon."

"I would much prefer not to meet him," Tib replied hastily; "but here is John Nash, who is quite eager to make his acquaintance."

John was accordingly led forward by the professor, and the two young men, of such widely different social stations and education, soon found that they had much in common in their admiration of the beautiful buildings of Venice. The count invited John Nash to take a gondola trip with him the next day, and they talked so long together that when John looked for Winifred and Tib, he found that they had slipped away.

CHAPTER VI.

ANGELO ZANELLI'S SECRET.

ANGELO ZANELLI had two profound causes for melancholy—one personal, the other inherited. On his return to Venice from the trip taken to America in his boyhood, he had become absorbed in his studies, entering the University of Padua early, and remaining in it for several post-graduate courses. Returning again to Venice after the death of his father, he devoted himself to his mother and to the study of the history of Venice, a study which led him finally to the preparation of the work upon which he was now engaged.

Angelo's father had never told his wife the story of the alchemist ancestor, and until his

death she had been ignorant of the existence of the mezzanine story. But when Angelo came back from Padua, and certain changes were made in the disposition of the rooms, he showed her the door behind the portrait and took her into the little rooms. To her everything seemed very simple. It was a doctor's office, long unused; and she readily consented to its use by her son as a study and dark room for his photography.

Widowhood had rendered the contessa averse to society, and they had rented the principal floor of the palazzo, with its grand banquet hall, once used for splendid entertainments, to Professor Waite as residence and studio, and the contessa and her son retired to the upper story. There was no communication between this apartment and the alchemist's rooms; and so, rather than trouble Professor Waite by passing so often through his studio, the count decided to have the stone work taken out which had so long sealed the door on the side of the Canal del Espirito, though this was an act in defiance of the seal of the Church set upon it so long ago. When the attention of the girls had first been called to the door by Tribolo, it was in broad

daylight, and they had seen that it was blocked with rough stones. But these had been removed before they passed that way again, on the night of the *festa*. The man whose gondola they had followed, and who had paused before the door, so deeply in shadow that they had not noticed that the wall had been taken down, was the count. Tribolo had taken him for the ghost of the old alchemist, and had imagined that he had passed through the solid stone—and, indeed, the appearance had been very uncanny; and it was a long time before the girls discovered that the door had been opened, for Tribolo could not be persuaded to pass through the canal again.

It so happened that the old janitor had never heard that the count used the suite of rooms or had opened the door. He knew, of course, of the existence of the apartment and the popular story of its being haunted, but in his opinion it was a disgrace to be stoutly contradicted; and so when questioned by the girls and John Nash he had denied its existence. In the mean time Angelo Zanelli found the rooms a very congenial retreat. He took his coffee in the early morning upon the balcony, and then

left the house by the front door in his gondola, usually rowing himself, for he did not go far. He simply turned into the Canal del Espirito and fastened the gondola to the hitching-post before the alchemist's door—for he found the seclusion of his ancestor's laboratory very favorable to quiet writing, reading, and the developing and printing of his photographs; and so it became his habit every day to unlock this postern door and disappear mysteriously from the world. He used the old magician's cabinet for his writing-desk, and for a time wrote on his book without interesting himself in the papers of the alchemist.

One day, however, a yellow parchment nailed to the interior of the cabinet door caught his eye. It was headed with a black cross and read in Latin as follows:

"To all to whom this paper may come: Be it known that this is a true account of the trial of Giovanni Zanelli, doctor of medicine and alchemist, before the Holy Office of the Inquisition, wherein he was convicted of introducing the plague into Venice, being bribed thereto by the Sultan of Turkey, and was charged with the concoction of poisons and

the practice of alchemy and other heinous practices."

Filled with horror, Angelo read the paper to the end. It seemed that his ancestor had acquired much of his knowledge in the Saracen University of Toledo, where he had studied chemistry—at that time called alchemy. Convinced of the knowledge of the Saracen physicians, he pursued his travels to Eastern lands, and there made studies of the plague, and originated ideas of his own as to the disease. Returned to Venice, he shut himself in his laboratory, pursuing experiments in chemistry which were looked upon with suspicion by the Church —for his travels and studies among the infidels were well known—and he drew upon himself remark by dressing in semi-Oriental fashion and by wearing a full beard.

He was charged, too, with manufacturing poisons for Cæsar Borgia, and the charge was partly proved by portions of a correspondence which had passed between them. But the direct crime for which he was executed, and for which, if it was really committed, he richly deserved death, was for introducing and spreading the plague in Venice. The Holy Office

attempted to make him confess under torture that he had received vast sums from the Sultan for committing this nefarious crime; but this he denied to the last. It was, however, clearly proved, from the evidence of eye-witnesses, that he had obtained the blood of plague-stricken persons and had inoculated other patients with the same; and this he did not deny, but brazenly asserted was an experiment with a view to their cure. The Holy Office could accept no such flimsy excuse as this; and even to Angelo this revelation, coming before the announcement of the discovery of antitoxine, seemed proof conclusive of his ancestor's guilt. He was overcome with shame, and he did not attempt to read a diary, which he afterward discovered in a secret compartment of the cabinet, which had baffled the search of the inquisitors, who had burned all other papers, together with the fine medical library, and many Arabian manuscripts, in the *auto-da-fé* which consumed the body of the sorcerer himself.

This was Angelo's inheritance of shame; but he had a more personal grief. Like a dream, indistinct in certain details, but wonderfully

clear in others, he had always remembered his little playmate, the child who, without having ever seen Venice, loved it as much as he did, and knew so much more than he about its old legends and traditions. He had never cared for these old stories till she told them to him; they had turned the current of his life and made him an ardent student of the literature and history of his country. As a child it had not occurred to him to write to her, but only to wait patiently until happy fate should bring them together again. When, as a youth, this method of communication did suggest itself, he could not remember her real name, only what they had decided it should be some day—Nellie Zanelli. Lately he had come across the silver *bonbonnière*, the mate to the one which he had given her. He recalled the circumstances vividly, and at first it gave him pleasure, for he felt that as the name Zanelli was engraved on the box, she knew his name, and that this slender clew might some day bring about their meeting. But this feeling was speedily overshadowed by a great dread. He remembered perfectly where he had found this strange double box, and as he opened his part and

looked at the amber-like globules, a distrust glided, serpent-like, into his mind. He examined the lid of the box with a magnifying-glass, for there seemed to be some inscription engraved within it. Little by little it came out with startling distinctness: "This is the famous Borgia poison. One pellet dissolved in wine will produce death." He was so overcome with horror that he was almost paralyzed.

This, then, was the farewell present which he had given his little playmate—a poison in the guise of innocent-appearing bon-bons, which, if taken by herself or by any one else, would result in certain death. Perhaps the child had long ago died, a victim to his boyish ignorance and carelessness. He wrote at once to his great-aunt, the sister of Captain Snyder, asking what had become of the little girl who at the time of his visit was their nearest neighbor. He was partly relieved by her reply. The little girl was not dead. She had become an artist, and had lately visited her parents on Long Island previously to going abroad. This altered a resolve that Angelo had made to visit America if Nellie was still alive, seek her out, and tell her of the dangerous character of the pres-

ent which he had unwittingly given her. Nellie was somewhere in Europe; but Aunt Eliza had neglected to give him her last name or her present address. For this he wrote, and for it he now waited with great impatience. Neither of these troubles—the long-inherited disgrace, which his father had known but had kept secret, hoping that the pain of its knowledge might be spared his descendants, nor this fear of an agency for evil placed by his own act near a sweet and innocent being whose memory he cherished—did he feel that he could share with his mother.

But he was not an adept at dissembling; and she, watching him as mothers do, knew that her son had a secret grief or fear whose nature she could not guess, but which filled her with more alarm than a knowledge of the facts themselves would have done. It was something which had made him declare very seriously that he could never marry, and which made him more and more a solitary and melancholy man. And yet Angelo was not morose by nature, and sometimes his gay, sweet disposition would flicker up like a flame through a charred log and dance brightly for a time,

and he would tuck his mother's arm within his own, and placing her in his gondola, row her far out on the lagoons for a day of pleasure, and he would sing the Venetian songs merrily and echo the cries of the boatmen and fishermen in pure boyish fun. But always, as he moored the gondola in front of the palace steps, fastening it to one of the decorated hitching-posts that sprout like asparagus stalks from the water, the gloom of the shadow fell again upon his face. Close to his heart, consumed by his gnawing anxiety as to the deadly work that the Borgia poison bon-bons might do, he carried the twin box; and he had taken an oath, foolish and wicked, though prompted by a sense of justice, that if he should hear of a life lost through his childish fault he would take his own life in the same way as punishment and reparation.

But with all his trouble, Angelo Zanelli was still a young man, and not unimpressionable. He had noticed the young American girls even before the luckless dialogue which they had enacted for their own entertainment, and each time that he had met them sketching in the old courtyards the girl with the Madonna face had

interested him more and more. He was angry with himself that this should be, that the witchery of a mere face should possess such power over him, when he had such conclusive proof of her frivolous mind. He had consistently avoided meeting her, always leaving his favorite morning haunt, the balcony opposite the Salute, as soon as he could hear the young ladies just inside their windows chatting over their breakfast. He even congratulated himself on the rudeness with which he had declined Professor Waite's offer to present him, but for all this the sweet young face would persist in haunting his thoughts. To interest himself actively in some one else, he had taken upon himself to act as guide to John Nash, and proceeded to introduce him to all his favorite nooks in Venice. John was appreciative, quick, and artistic to his finger-tips. It was a pleasure to enlighten his ignorance. He was impressed by the colorful harmony of San Marco, but he persisted obstinately in enjoying quite as much the delicate tracery of the Venetian Gothic; and when Professor Waite handed the count a set of pen-and-ink drawings of the façades of Gothic palaces, and remarked that they were

offered as illustrations for his book by a young artist who wished to be nameless, he at once concluded that they were by John Nash.

"They are admirable," he said as he glanced them over, "and I think I can guess who drew them."

"Then do not disclose your suspicions to the artist," the professor replied, "but carry on all negotiations through me. It may seem strange to you that such modesty and sensitiveness can exist hand in hand with such talent; but this is the condition on which they are submitted."

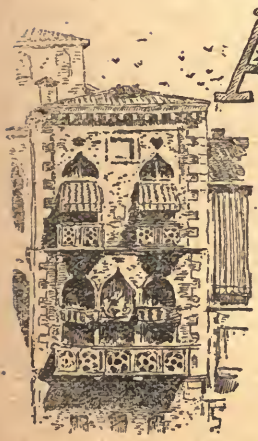
When, later, Angelo Zanelli looked the drawings over more carefully, another point struck him, which seemed to prove that they had been made by John Nash. It was John's familiarity with each of the palaces represented. This was quite natural, for he had accompanied the girls on a number of their sketching excursions, and had talked over the buildings with them as they met at the hotel.

The count had laid the package of drawings aside, and had not examined them closely until Professor Waite recalled them to his memory a week later by presenting him with another set.

He was both surprised and delighted, and he could not imagine why John should wish to make a secret of their authorship, especially as it seemed to the count so very apparent. Here in the second set were the façades of palaces which he had recommended to John (and to which the faithful fellow had immediately guided Tib). The first set was made up entirely of palaces on the Grand Canal, to which every gondolier convoys the tourist, but those of the second week he was sure could not have been discovered by a new-comer without his direction. It was very foolish for John to insist on his incognito, and it was almost more than the count could do to respect it.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOTHIC PALACES.



AMONG the Gothic palaces which Tib had drawn, there were none whose details she had copied with more fidelity and affection than the little Palazzo Contarini, whose upper stories are shown at the head of this chapter. Beside this she had sketched the Ca' d'Oro, the Giustiniani, the Foscari, with parts of several others. And as these are the buildings which first fascinate the eye and win the heart of every visitor to Venice, a word of description may not be out of place.

The Ca' d'Oro, or Casa Doro, so called either from its gildings or because it once belonged to

the Doro family, is one of the most fascinating of the Moorish-Gothic palaces, and it shows best the transition from the Byzantine to the Gothic style, combining as it does many fascinating features of both.

The fronts of the old Byzantine palaces, as illustrated in the Fondaca dei Turchi, consisted of two long arcades of arches ; but in the Gothic the central portion only was open, while these arched spaces were contrasted by solid walls on either side, framing the ornate openings and giving an effect of more solidity to the entire building. The Ca' d'Oro has only one of these solid wings, as the building was never finished ; but this slight irregularity added the charm of waywardness and capricious picturesqueness to this radiant, fairy-like structure, and perhaps this very inconsistency has caused it to be denominated "the embodiment of the feminine" among the more dignified and manly Renaissance palaces. The metaphor might be carried still further, and the query raised whether the graceful, wayward bride were quite happy in her association with her heavier and somewhat pompous companion, a Renaissance palace now turned into a hotel. The Ca' d'Oro has suffered

much from neglect and restoration. Its interior staircase, said to have been the most interesting of its kind in Venice, was broken up and sold for waste marble. But through all its vicissitudes (still like a noble-hearted woman) it has preserved its cheerful character—elegant, noble, gay. Tib was sure that there never were skeletons in its closets or festering corpses buried beneath its pavements. Only pure and lovely ladies, like the originals of Rosalba Carriera's pastels, leaned over those lace-like balconies; only honorable as well as debonair noblemen walked in those beautiful corridors. The palace has such a bright and happy look that nothing evil or sinister could make its home here.

And yet Tib found that one of the saddest tragedies of Venice brought ruin to two noble houses whose homes were palaces of this same lightsome, Venetian-Gothic architecture. These two palaces, the Contarini and the Ca' d'Oro, were among the first which she drew. Perhaps it was principally from association, but Tib loved the little jewel-box Contarini palace quite as much as the more admired Ca' d'Oro, for it was from this exquisite little building that a

daughter of that house was rowed in the bucentaur or state gala barge to her marriage with the unfortunate Jacopo Foscari, while a bridge of boats was thrown across the Grand Canal for the bridegroom and his retinue of three hundred horse, and tournaments were held for three days in the Piazza of San Marco.

This was the story which had caught her childish fancy, and she drew with infinite patience and with real love the fanciful whorls of the balcony, which reminded her of fern fronds and other convoluted forms of leaf unfolding, rather than the geometrical frost crystals of quatrefoils and trefoils repeated in the Ducal Palace and in the stately house of the Foscaris. This design, copied again and again in the palaces built shortly after the Ducal Palace, seemed a little mechanical at last, and in its paucity of invention reminded her of the ease with which Lolo stamped quatrefoils and trefoils in the sand with his tin cake-cutter. But it was an argument for the inherent beauty of these simple forms that she never really wearied of them even in their multifarious repetition. The Foscari palace, too, the same that was built during the glorious doge-

ship of the elder Foscari, to conform with the growing state of his house, was so dignified, so in keeping with the upright character and splendid ability of the man who ruled Venice during her most brilliant period, and bore his loss of office with such nobility that it reflected disgrace only upon the enemy that planned it, that Tib inclined her head with involuntary reverence each time that her gondola passed it. She remembered how the old doge had endured his son's sentence, counselling him to submit to the punishment decreed by Venice, and how, when deposed through the same malice which had occasioned the sufferings and death of his son, he had passed down the Giant's Staircase with the same dignity that he had mounted it to his coronation. But the walls of his home could not shut out the pealing of the great bell announcing the accession of a new doge, and with that peal his great heart broke. Many of the gondola posts in front of the palaces were surmounted by the ducal cap, proclaiming that the building had been the home of a doge. Next door to the Foscari palace was another which shared this honor—one of the three palaces of the Giustiniani. There is a romantic

legend connected with this family which has often been related. During one of the wars of Venice with the Greeks in the twelfth century, every known male member of the house was slain ; but the state, not willing that this heroic race should perish from the earth, remembered a young monk of the family in the Convent of San Niccolo on the Lido, and obtained a dispensation from the Pope to allow him to quit his convent, return to the world, and, marrying Anna Michieli, the daughter of the doge, found anew the ancient house. Later in life, when five sons had been given them ("among whose descendants," says the chronicle, "afterward flourished men of the highest intellect and great orators") Niccolo Giustiniani and his wife parted, and gave the remnant of their lives to the cloister.

In the seventeenth century the doge's cap crowned the gondola post, and it was about this time that different descendants of the monk built the three Gothic palaces in the noblest site on the Grand Canal, whence, on one hand, you can look down to the Rialto Bridge, and on the other far up toward the Church of the Salute. Mr. and Mrs. William Dean Howells

lived during their last year in Venice in one of these magnificent buildings. Speaking of their housekeeping in the Palazzo Giustiniani, which Adelaide's in the Palazzo Zanelli greatly resembled, he says :

"If the furniture of the principal bedroom was somewhat scanty, its dimensions were unlimited. The ceiling was fifteen feet high, and was divided into rich and heavy panels, adorned each with a mighty rosette of carved and gilded wood two feet across. The parlor had not its original decorations in our time, but it had once had so noble a carved ceiling that it was found worth while to take it down and sell it into England ; and it still has two grand Venetian mirrors, a vast and very good painting of a miracle of St. Anthony, and imitation antique tables and armchairs. The last were frolicked all over with carven nymphs and cupids ; but they were of such frail construction that more than one of our American visitors was dismayed at having these proud articles of furniture go to pieces upon his attempt to use them like mere armchairs of ordinary life."

These four palaces—the Ca' d'Oro, the Contarini, the Foscari, and the Giustiniani—Tib

had drawn most lovingly ; but she also sketched a number of other Gothic palaces—the Hotel Danieli, formerly the home of the Nani Mocenigo family ; the Palazzo Morosini, the Palazzo Cavalli, with its carved lions looking a bit out of place in the glistening whiteness of its restoration among its time-discolored neighbors.

After having become well acquainted with the Grand Canal, they found it a most fascinating occupation to make tours of exploration in the smaller waterways, and Tribolo would row them through strange labyrinths, around sharp corners, and under shadowy bridges to see some pile of magnificence in ruins. They discovered one such on a narrow canal crowded by squalid buildings swarmed with children and with the very poorest people. They called it *their* palace, and fancied that they owned it by right of discovery, until John Nash told them that this was Count Zanelli's favorite palace, and one which he had especially advised him to make a sketch of, drawing his attention to the fact that Ruskin had also given the seal of his approval to the Palazzo Bernardo by declaring it, "after the Ducal Palace, the noblest in effect of all in Venice."

The count had indicated many walks which could be taken, for streets and squares are so connected by the network of narrow sidewalks which border the canals, and by the infinitude of bridges which cross them, that he who knows the city only by gondola has lost many of its most picturesque aspects. There was a noble door opening upon a little quay which she drew in detail, half expecting that the wicket, made for examination of the stranger who struck its ponderous fish-shaped knocker, might open and the porter order her to be gone. Instead of this, some children in the garden within climbed a cherry-tree that leaned over the wall and showered cherries upon her as she drew.

They were not privileged to see the interiors of many of these private palaces; but they knew that this was Venice's grandest era, and they could form a good idea, from the decorations of the Ducal Palace, of what the beauty of these princely homes must have been. Howells tells us of the grand ball-room of the Pisani Palace, "where might have danced that Contarini who, when his wife's necklace of pearls fell upon the floor in the way of her partner,

the King of Denmark, advanced and ground it into powder with his foot, that the king might not be troubled to avoid treading on it." He tells, too, of the magnificent country-seat of the Pisani family at Stra, "now with scarcely any addition to its splendor, an imperial residence; and the Pisani barge, a great gilded affair all carven outside with the dumpling loves and loose nymphs of the period, with fruits and flowers and what not; and within luxuriously cushioned and furnished, and stocked with good things for pleasure-making in the gross old fashion."

Grander than any of the private palaces, from which many of them were copied, the Ducal Palace compelled the most respectful admiration of our young artists. Ruskin calls it the central historical building of the world, since it unites all three of the principal styles of Venice, is still chiefly and pre-eminently Gothic. Tib grew to admire it as much as she did San Marco. The long line of its pillars, springing like the stalks of lilies from the ground without bases, gave the impression of natural growth. The great rosy wall, cut at intervals by its simple windows, taught the dignity and

repose of broad spaces unteased by ornament. She studied the capitals of the columns with her Ruskin in hand, and drew the Giant's Staircase, trying to imagine how it looked during the coronation of a doge. She walked along the Riva dei Schiavoni in the direction of the Public Garden to obtain a view of the exquisite Bridge of Sighs spanning the canal between the palace and the gloomy prison. It was no matter that modern writers had proved that no one for whose misfortunes one should weep had ever been confined in those terrible dungeons—unless possibly her old hero, Jacopo Foscari. It was enough that he had languished there after torture, and the guide showed them oubliettes—wells in the floor of the cells—into which victims might be plunged; while there was truth in the tradition that the prison barge rowed all too frequently to that dark canal, in which rod and net were never allowed to be cast, lest it should reveal the dread secrets of the Council of Ten.

In the Sala del Major Consilia, arranged in chronological order as a frieze above the other paintings, are the portraits of seventy-two of the one hundred and twenty doges. Every one

pauses before the black space, in which the following inscription takes the place of the customary portrait:

"This is the place of Marino Faliero, beheaded for his crimes."

But the palace as a whole is lightsome and beautiful, the noblest civic building of the world. No town hall of the North can compare with it for dignity or for gorgeousness of its interior decoration, for the great masters of the Venetian school can best be studied in its mural paintings.

As they stood before Tintoretto's stupendous work, "The Paradise," and Professor Waite explained the plan of its composition in concentric zones, like the interior of a cupola, the figures of saints, angels, and glorified spirits rising toward the central and highest point, toward Christ and the Madonna, they were struck by the wonderful daring in conception and execution of this master, who could group five hundred figures so intricately and yet so harmoniously.

Ruskin enumerates fourteen paintings in the Ducal Palace as specially worthy of attention. Indeed, he says that the multitude of works by

various masters which cover the walls of the palace is so great that the traveller would better refuse all attention except to these fourteen, of which ten are Tintoretto's. Of these he places the "Paradise" first. The girls studied the series with careful reference to the "Stones of Venice," for Ruskin certainly is Tintoretto's best lover; and the dashing genius could ask no better interpreter and apologist.

Tib was interested by the four mythological paintings which occupy the angles of the Anti-Collegio; the faded "Bacchus and Ariadne," which Ruskin assures us was once one of the noblest pictures in the world, and especially by the "Minerva and Mars," which, strange to say, he does not mention. To Paul Veronese, with whom the great critic is not in sympathy, he still gives place in his list of masterpieces of the Ducal Palace for three paintings: the "Europa," in the same room as the foregoing, the Venice enthroned on its ceiling, which he admits is "one of the grandest pieces of frank color in the Ducal Palace," and "Venice" and the "Doge Sebastian Vernier" in the Sala del Collegio, to which he gives high praise. This beautiful room, with its roof painted entirely

by Paul Veronese, is a favorite one of Ruskin's, and he advises the traveller who really loves painting to "pass the sunny summer mornings there again and again, wandering now and then into the Anti-Collegio and the Sala dei Pregadi, and coming back to rest under the wings of the couched lion at the feet of the 'Mocenigo,'" for "he will not otherwise enter so deeply into the heart of Venice."

Tib felt that Ruskin did great injustice to Titian in mentioning in this list but one of his paintings, "The Doge Grimani Kneeling before Faith," and that in terms of detraction, as a striking example of his "want of feeling and coarseness of perception."

There were other paintings not noted at all by the great critic which won her heart, and for a time the Ducal Palace drew Tib away from her architectural drawing. After wandering through its wonderful rooms, she declared to Winnie, "I can content myself with drawing in black and white no longer. I must drop it for a time, for I am hungry for color and must paint. I want to copy a Titian. I will ask Professor Waite's advice as to which one, and order a canvas at once."

They tapped at the studio door as soon as they reached home, and Adelaide greeted them with delight.

"I have just been to your rooms to call upon you with the Contessa Zanelli," she exclaimed. "It is a great attention, for she goes out very little. She is very much pleased with you both, but she is especially in love with you, Tib; and when she asked what part of America was your home, and I told her that you were born at some insignificant little place down on Long Island, she was greatly excited, and asked if it was Scup Haven, which is her own birthplace. I told her I thought that sounded like the name. How funny it would be if you should find that you are from the same place!"

"I have known it for some time," Tib replied. "I remember when the contessa visited her father fifteen years ago. I saw her frequently; we were neighbors."

"Then why didn't you recall yourself to her when you met her here? You are the most modest and least assertive little person I ever saw. She will like you all the better, though, for leaving her to make the advances. And she has made them, for she invites us all to

take a gondola excursion with her to-morrow out upon the lagoons. We are to carry our luncheons and spend the entire day cruising among the islands."

Winnie uttered a little shriek of delight, but Tib flushed and replied uncertainly, "I am afraid I can't spend the time. I want to begin my painting," and she explained the longing which had come over her.

"Nonsense," said the professor good naturedly; "you must have your canvas stretched before you can attack your Titian, and you can take your sketch-box with you. I shall do so, and we shall probably find some good out-of-door studies."

"Is her son going?" It was Winnie, not Tib, who asked.

"Of course," Adelaide replied. "We are to take our three gondolas. The count will be my escort. Mr. Waite will take Winnie, and Tib is to go with the contessa. You must not refuse, for it would offend her greatly. She has settled everything, provided for everything, and she is not a woman who enjoys having her plans set aside.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE LAGOONS.

PROFESSOR WAITE had said that the contessa did not like to have her plans thwarted, and she was rarely called upon to undergo such an experience, for destiny had been very kind to her. She adored her son, and he answered her affection with filial devotion; it was the aim of each to make the other happy; an aim in which the son at least was perfectly successful. But in this particular plan of the gondola excursion the contessa had reckoned without her host, or rather without her principal guest. She had arranged it as a pleasant surprise for her son; and lo!

when he was consulted he was not at all pleased.

"You must make your trip without me, mother," he had said when she had informed him that she had invited the Waites and their young lady friends to spend the day upon the lagoons. "I have promised to show the sights of Venice to a young American."

"Bring him with you," suggested the contessa.

"He would not be an acceptable addition to the party. He is a rough diamond, not, I should judge, used to ladies' society, though he is a very interesting fellow to me."

The contessa saw that her son was not to be persuaded, and wisely forbore persuasion. At the appointed time she called on the Waites, presented her son's excuses, and the party set out in two gondolas instead of three, the contessa appropriating Tib to herself. The contessa's gondola was a luxurious one, cushioned and curtained daintily and fitted up with many ingenious little contrivances for comfort, more roomy than a carriage, with lockers for luncheon, for books, for sketching materials, with a warm hood for inclement weather, lanterns for

gala evenings, and a fluttering awning that fans and shades on warm summer afternoons.

The gondola has been best described by Hopkinson Smith, who has used it for many seasons as his out-of-doors studio. How picturesquely he writes!

"In my experience there is nothing like a gondola to paint from, especially in the summer. Then all these Venetian cabs are gay in their sunshiny attire, and have laid aside their dark, hooded cloaks, their rainy-day mackintoshes—their *felsi*—and have pulled over their shoulders a frail awning of creamy white, with snowy draperies at sides and back, under which you paint in state or lounge luxuriously, drinking in the beauty about you. A cozy curtain-closed nest, a little boudoir with down cushions and silk fringes and soft morocco coverings, kept afloat by a long, lithe, swan-like, moving boat, bearing itself proudly with head high in air—alive or still, alert or restful, and obedient to your lightest touch—half sea-gull revelling in the sunlight, half dolphin cutting the dark water."

Tib settled herself luxuriously by the side of the contessa, who chatted most entertainingly,

describing the different buildings which they passed. She had chosen a tortuous route through the northeastern quarter of Venice, their destination for luncheon a restaurant near the house that once was Titian's home, and possessing from its terrace, where they would take their noonday repast, the same beautiful view across the lagoon of the Dolemite Alps. The part of Venice through which they threaded their way before coming out on the northern shore is not visited by the hurried tourist, though it is dear to the heart of the artist and all lovers of the picturesque. The authors who have loved Venice most have each found it out and written lovingly of its humbler charms—for it is the quarter of the poor—and though you pass many a noble house, which has been the home of the illustrious of ages past, these palaces have now an air of aristocratic decay and a proud poverty which disdains alike assistance or pity. Each member of the party could refer to some writer who had sung the praises of this particular trip. It was Adelaide who pointed out that Hare was speaking of this northeastern quarter of Venice when he wrote: "This excursion is one which gives an ad-

mirable idea of the quiet bits of beauty in the side canals, of the marvellous variety of the palaces rising steeply from the pale green water, of the brilliant acacias leaning over the old sculptured walls, of the banksia roses falling over the parapets of the little courts like snowdrifts, and of the tamarisks feathering down into the water."

Winnie had discovered that her favorite author, Dickens, loved this quarter of the workmen, and wrote of it: "Floating down narrow lanes, where carpenters, at work with plane and chisel in their shops, toss the light shaving straight upon the water, where it lies like a weed or ebbs away before us in a tangled heap; past open doors, decayed and rotten from long steeping in the wet, through which some scanty patch of vine shines green and bright, making unusual shadows on the pavement with its trembling leaves; past quays and terraces, where women, gracefully veiled, are passing and repassing, and where idlers are reclining in the sunshine on flagstones and on flights of steps; past bridges, where there are idlers, too, loitering and looking over; below, stone balconies erected at a giddy height; past plots of

garden, theatres, shrines, prodigious piles of architecture—Gothic-Saracenic—fanciful with all the fancies of all times and countries ; past buildings that were high and low, and black and white, and straight and crooked, mean and grand, crazy and strong ; twining among a tangled lot of boats and barges, and shooting out at last into a Grand Canal."

Their own course was in the contrary direction. At almost the first turning after leaving the highway of the Grand Canal they came upon the beautiful door of the Palazzo Sanudo, a noble Gothic fourteenth-century palace with Byzantine cornices. This door is the most perfect of its period in Venice, and illustrates the transition from the Byzantine to the Gothic period. They paused to admire its richly carved panels, and the professor pointed out the wicket or little door in the great one, for the examination of the stranger demanding entrance, and its heavy bronze knocker in the form of a dolphin. There was a tempting garden at its side. Tib remarked that she thought Miss Thackeray must have intended to describe this part of their trip when she wrote this bit of word painting, which had in

pressed her so vividly that she was able to repeat it:

"Now it is a palace to let, with wooden shutters swinging in shadow; now we pass the yawning vaults of great warehouses piled with saffron and crimson dyes, where barges are moored and workmen strain at the rolling barrels. Now it is the brown wall of some garden terrace; a garland has crept over the brick, and droops almost to the water; one little spray encircles a rusty ring hanging there with its shadow. Now we touch palace walls, and with a hollow jar start off once more. Now comes a snatch of song through an old archway; here are boats and voices; the gondolier's earrings twinkle in the sun. A little brown-faced boy is lying with his brown legs in the sun on the very edge of a barge, dreaming over into the green water; he lazily raises his head to look, and falls back again; now a black boat passes like a ghost; now it is out of all this swing of shadow and confusion that we cross a broad, sweet breadth of sunlight and come into the Grand Canal."

They moored their gondolas at the restaurant and followed the professor through a tangle of

calles, or narrow lanes, to the house once occupied by Titian. They had better fortune than most tourists, for they were admitted, and saw a part of the garden which was so extensive and beautiful in Titian's day, running down to the shore and having its own little wharf for the embarkation of its guests. Titian owned a large house, but only occupied the main upper stories, which had a loggia communicating with the garden by a stone staircase. The lower story had no doors or windows upon this garden, but fronted upon a side *calle*, and was occupied by shops. The house has been much altered since Titian's time, his noble studio cut up into small rooms, and its frescoes—presumably by the hand of the master—at first whitewashed, then cleaned, taken down, and sold into England. Tib came later to have a greater interest in the garden, as she became better acquainted with the period during which Titian lived, and learned the associations connected with the spot. At this, her first visit, she knew only what Howells had written, and she agreed with him that it had "an incomparably lovely and delightful situation." It looked out over the lagoon, across the quiet isle of sepul-

chres, San Michele, across the smoking chimneys of the Murano Glass Works, and the bell towers of her churches, to the long line of the seashore on the right and to the mainland on the left, and beyond the nearer lagoon islands, and the faintly pencilled outlines of Torcello and Burano in front, to the sublime distance of the Alps shining in silver and purple, and resting their snowy heads against the clouds. It had a pleasant garden of flowers and trees, into which the painter descended by an open stairway, and in which he is said to have studied the famous tree in the "Death of Peter Martyr." Here he entertained the great and noble of his day, and here he feasted and made merry with the gentle sculptor Sansovino, and with their common friend, the rascal poet Aretino.

After their visit to Titian's house they lunched *al fresco* (out of doors) at the little restaurant on the Fondamente Nuove on delicious fish, a salad, black coffee, cheese, and fruit, and then their gondolas left the narrow canals and shot out upon the open lagoon. As they passed the cemetery island of San Michele they saw a boat funeral approaching. Silently it stole on its way, but it was difficult to

imagine that the gondolas were other than pleasure boats like their own, for the island villages, white and vermilion, glittered merrily in the silvery blue setting, and there was nothing funereal in the scene except the crape-like scarf of smoke floating from the chimneys of the glass furnaces over the island of Murano. This as they approached was seen to be no badge of mourning, but a symbol of activity and prosperity. They paused to visit the churches, the Duomo, with its mosaic Madonna, and the Church of the Angeli to see the portrait of Doge Barberigo kneeling before the Virgin—one of the noblest of Giovanni Bellini's canvases—and then they went over the Salviatti Glass Manufactory.

The contessa called their attention to the wonderful reproductions of the ancient mosaics.

An intelligent custodian showed them a large collection of exquisite imitations of the old Venetian glass in infinite variety of twisted floral forms tinted with the marvellous colors of every gem—opal, ruby, aquamarine, emerald, milky mottled agate, and gold-flecked crystal. He showed them also a cabinet of antique

specimens, very rare and valuable, from which these were copied.

"We have one cup which bears your name," he said to the contessa. "It is the Zanelli beaker, so called from a chemist of note, perhaps of your family, who, it is said, discovered how to mingle reactions in the glass, so that it serves as a detecter of certain poisons. Here is the cup."

He set before them a delicate glass of ordinary aspect, except that a green serpent was coiled about it, forming the handle with one of its convolutions, while its head was buried deep in the interior of the cup, as though thirstily endeavoring to drink its contents. Around the brim of the cup was an inscription in gold in Latin which Winnie translated: "I die to preserve life."

The contessa started. "That," said she, "is a motto painted over the laboratory door of an ancestor of my husband's who was a physician."

"Then I am sure," said Tib, "that he must have been the inventor of this detective glass. Of what kind of poison does it announce the presence?"

"No one knows," replied the custodian. "The legend says only that if wine containing the celebrated poison of the Borgias is poured into this cup, the instant that it mounts to the little red tongue of the serpent the glass will be shivered to atoms. No one knows of what the Borgia poison consisted. Possibly, too, the legend of the power possessed by the goblet is a mere fabrication."

"You could easily ascertain by experimenting with different kinds of poisons," Tib replied, much excited.

"Yes," admitted the custodian; "but it is hardly worth while to prove the truth of the tradition at the expense of shattering this beautiful specimen of antique glass. We are more interested in it as a work of art than in proving or disproving idle legends."

"If this chemist Zanelli was really your ancestor," Tib said to the contessa as they left the manufactory, "it is probable that you possess among your heirlooms some of this detective glass."

"It is possible," the contessa replied. "We will ask Angelo; he seems greatly interested in everything connected with the history of his

father's family, though my husband manifested a strange ignorance and indifference to genealogical matters, and always maintained that what one's ancestors had done conveyed neither distinction nor shame upon his descendants, but that every man was noble or ignoble according to his own conduct."

The party embarked again and followed a channel marked in the shallow lagoon by a procession of posts to the island of Burano, for a glimpse at the lace-workers, who, under the patronage of the Countess Marcello, have revived the manufacture of the exquisite point de Venise.

Winnie bought a beautiful collar, copied from an antique pattern, worn possibly by Catharine de Cornaro, or designed—as she liked to think was quite possible—by Rosalba Carriera, who, before she became a painter, occupied herself in this way. It was Professor Waite's turn to hasten them here by reminding them that they would have a very late dinner if they did not immediately proceed to their picnic ground, Torcello.

In deference to the claims of hunger, they postponed further sightseeing, and ran their

gondolas up a lonely canal, or rather creek, for in its neglect it was difficult to decide whether it had ever been an artificial waterway, and gliding between grassy banks, they moored in a little inlet back of the ruins of the first church. At a little distance was the Cathedral, with its group of buildings, and close to them the marble seat in the open field called Attila's Throne. Here in the solitude of the deserted city, on grass-grown mounds, ruins of that first city of which the count had told them, they spread their little feast, taken from the well-filled paniers which Tribolo brought to them from the gondolas. The violets leaned their blue heads over the tablecloth, and there was not a sound or glimpse of any human being to interrupt their privacy.

Just as Winnie had given an artistic touch to the grapes, piled on their own vine leaves, and stood off regarding the effect, wishing that there were other artistic eyes to appreciate it, and Adelaide, as she lifted the last roast chicken from the hamper, was lamenting that there were not more in the party to enjoy the feast, they heard a merry halloo behind them, and turning, beheld another gondola gliding up the

inlet. It was the count and John Nash; for, in order to make his excuse true, Angelo had sought John out and taken him away for a sketching trip on the lagoon. Not knowing the destination of his mother's excursion, he had by sheer trickery chance stumbled into the very party which he had determined to avoid.

There was no remedy for it now, and he came forward with his easy grace, backing up John's exuberant delight with polite courtesy.

"Just in time for luncheon," was Adelaide's greeting. "You could not have timed it better if it had been a rendezvous."

"How do you know that it was not planned on my part?" Angelo replied, and his mother pleased—for she believed that he had repented and followed them—made haste to introduce him to Tib.

"This is Miss Smith," she said; "and we have just discovered that our parents were neighbors in my old Long Island home. I think you met when you were children, though probably neither of you remember it now."

Neither remembered! The good lady little imagined that the childish friendship was the

most vividly real thing for both in all the melting perspective of their early lives.

Angelo looked at Tib keenly. No, he would never have recognized his little playmate; but he was struck again by the placid beauty of her face, a beauty of expression more than of feature, though these were regular—a face telling of an earnest, thoughtful mind, of a pure life and high ideals, a face to respect, to trust, and for the few for whom she dropped that quiet barrier of reserve, to love. Angelo Zanelli felt all this as he looked, and at the same time there came upon him a great surging wave of recollection of their ideal child friendship, and he exclaimed impulsively, "Is it possible that you are Nellie Zanelli?"

Winnie laughed mischievously, and Professor Waite, who was something of a tease, replied jocosely that it was impossible to predict what a young lady's name might or might not become, but that at present their young friend rejoiced in a name borne by more distinguished people than any other the world over—namely, the noble cognomen of Smith.

The count showed his vexation and embarrassment; but Tib explained with perfect self-

possession: "When we were playfellows some fifteen years ago, Count Zanelli took a violent dislike to the sound of the word Smith, and amused himself by adopting me as his sister, in order that I might bear a more musical name."

"I heartily confirm the act of adoption," the contessa remarked kindly. "Your mother was my dear friend. You must urge your parents to come out to Venice before you return to America."

Having explained the situation, Tib speedily drew the conversation away from reminiscence, and chatted rather volubly of the places they had seen that morning, of Venice and its history, and of the opening chapter of his own book which he had read at Professor Waite's studio.

Count Zanelli was not wholly pleased. It seemed to him that she must either have forgotten all their intense childish affection, all their sympathetic intercourse, which had given to the old days their abiding influence over him, or else that they awoke no such feeling in her memory as in his own. He did not like to have the topic which was uppermost in his mind thus authoritatively dismissed, nor did he care to talk about his own work. He occupied

himself with his sandwiches and with serving the Chianti from the slender-necked, silken-tasselled flasks, and allowed others to carry on the conversation, assuming the position of a silent critic. He recalled his first impressions of Tib, and raged inwardly that a girl with so hopelessly frivolous a mind should have a face with such a subtle charm, and that, having it, she should be so coldly irresponsive. But he was not allowed to sulk in silence; the girls really wished to know more of the history of Torcello, and he could not refuse to give them the information for which they asked.

"You referred in your lecture to the Patriarch Orso," said Winnie. "I believe you said that he was at one time Bishop of Torcello and built this cathedral. I wish you would tell us about him."

"The history of the entire family is interesting," Count Zanelli replied, "and interwoven with that of Venice in its first glorious period. There were three doges in succession. The first abdicated to enter the Church; the second, his son, Pietro Orseolo, began to reign in 991, and was that leader who cleared the sea of pirates, took their robber-stronghold Lagosta,

and brought Istria, Dalmatia, and all the neighboring islands under the power of Venice. It was to celebrate this conquest that the ceremony of Venice wedding the sea was instituted. On his death his son Otto succeeded him, and his younger son, Orso, who had been Bishop of Torcello, was made Patriarch. The two brothers were noble, young, and devoted to each other. For fifteen years each occupied his position of honor with faithfulness—Otto a worthy successor of his illustrious father; Orso busying himself with the building of this cathedral, beautifying it with the old pillars that had been brought from Altinum, and with the others which we have seen to-day. But the Orseolo succession to the dogeship had come to be almost a hereditary dynasty, and the occupation of the highest offices, both secular and clerical, by two brothers could not fail to excite the envy of the other nobles. Plots and outbursts followed, culminating in the banishment of the doge and the elevation of a rival to his seat. But the new doge could not keep what he had seized, and he soon proved himself so incompetent that he was degraded from office, and the populace clamored for the restoration

of Doge Orseolo. But he had so successfully hidden his misfortunes in his exile that no one knew where he could be found, and so the Patriarch Orso was called from the cloister to the Ducal Palace to reign provisionally, while a younger brother was sent with a commission to travel through the East and find the banished Otto.

"I see that Mrs. Waite has brought 'The Makers of Venice' with her; and I will resign my office of historian and allow Mrs. Oliphant to finish the story from this point."

The audience protested, but the count was firm. He had seen the book under the cushion of the gondola, and turning to the page, he handed it to Adelaide, and she read aloud:

"'The voyage of the embassy occupied more than a year. During these long months Orso reigned in peace. Not a word of censure is recorded of his peaceful sway. In the splendor of those halls which his fathers had built he watched over Venice, on one hand, and on the other for the ships sailing back across the lagoons, bringing the banished Otto home. How many a morning must he have looked out, before he said his Mass, upon the rising dawn

and watched the blueness of the skies and seas grow clear in the East, where lay his bishopric, his flock, his cathedral, and all the duties that were his, and with anxious eyes swept the winding of the level waters, still and gray, the metallic glimmer of the *aqua morte*, and the navigable channels that gleamed between! When a sail came in sight between those lines, stealing up from Malamocco, what expectations must have moved his heart!

"'But when the ships came back, their drooping banners and mourning array must have told the news long before they cast anchor in the lagoon. Otto was dead in exile. There is nothing said to intimate that they had brought back even his body to lay it with his fathers in San Zaccaria. The banished prince had found an exile's grave.

"'After this sad end to all his hopes, the noble Orso showed how magnanimous and disinterested had been his inspiration. Not for himself, but for Otto he had held that trust. He laid down at once those honors which were not his, and returned to his own charge and duties.

"'Many years after this Orso held his patriarchate in peace and honor, and the name of the

younger brother, Vitale, appears as his succession, while their sister, Felicia, was abbess of a convent at Torcello. But a connection of the family, Domenico, made an attempt to seize the supreme power, and the people, startled by the fear of dynastic succession, pronounced the race incapable henceforward of holding any office under the republic. The prohibition would seem to have been of little practical importance, since of the children of Pietro Orseolo the Great there remained none except priests and nuns. This story has the completeness of an epic. They lived and ruled and made Venice great. And then it was evident that they had completed their mission, and the race came to an end. Greatness has faded from the ancient commune as it faded from the family of their bishop, and Torcello, like the Orseoli, may seem to look wistfully yet with no grudge across the level waste of the sea to Venice, which has carried her life away. But the story of this tender brother, the banished doge's defender, champion, substitute, and mourner, he who reigned for Otto, and for himself neither sought nor accepted anything, is worthy of the scene.'

"But that does not seem mournful to me," said Adelaide, as she closed the book, "and Torcello never does. I think it is a more beautiful thing to close a story nobly than to fritter out at the end, to degenerate, as so many worthy families have done, leaving noble names to be ignobly borne; and I would rather see these noble buildings empty and desolate than put to vile uses."

"I agree with you, my dear," said the contessa. "To me Torcello is not sad. Looking at our beautiful Venice, we cannot regret that she burst this humble chrysalis. Lindsay has something of the same feeling when he says that his emotions here were something akin to 'gazing at the portrait of a hero in his childhood.'"

"And now to close our lecture with an object lesson," said Professor Waite, "you must all see the view from the top of the Campanile."

The girls, acting upon his suggestion, climbed to the top of the tower. Count Zanelli and John Nash followed, and joined them on the summit, where the count pointed out and named the different islands. The sunset was flushing the Alpine range, and the Doge's Palace, San

Marco, and the great Campanile of the Piazza were silhouetted against a sky of beaten gold. Winnie was ecstatic in her enthusiasm, and Tib's face showed that she was drinking in all this beauty with keen delight.

"How thankful I am," Count Zanelli thought, "that she does not choose this occasion to gush. If she had only had the wit to have kept quiet that first afternoon, what a different impression I might have had of her!" He handed Tib his field-glass and watched her as she swept the horizon with it, deciding that he was wrong in thinking that if he were an artist he would paint her looking straight out from the canvas with her soulful eyes fixed on the spectator. No artist could do justice to those eyes; it would be wiser to paint her in profile as he saw her now, looking away into the distance and quite unconscious that she herself was a beautiful picture.

They descended the stairs together, and found that Adelaide had packed the picnic baskets and that the contessa was quite ready to return to Venice. The sun had set, and she did not like to be so far out on the lagoons after dark.

"Do not be alarmed, mother," said the

count. "I sent back my gondola on our arrival, and shall return with you. I knew you would feel safer to have me with you, and I was sure the Waites could find room in their large gondola for Mr. Nash."

And so it happened that they drifted back to Venice together in the lovely twilight. The heavy felsa curtains were put back, and Tib sat half reclining among the cushions by the side of the contessa, while Angelo Zanelli sat opposite.

The party in the accompanying gondola sang college songs to Winnie's guitar, and Tib and Angelo Zanelli joined in the refrain. The contessa chatted at intervals, but the somnolent rocking of the boat soon had its effect, and she slept peacefully. Her son tucked the soft wraps about her tenderly and looked at her serene face with loving admiration. "Is she not beautiful?" he asked impulsively.

"Yes, indeed," Tib replied with earnestness; "you are rich in having such a mother."

He looked up gratefully. "I *am* rich," he replied; "I have her and Venice. And what do you think of Venice? I remember in the old days you were wonderfully well informed

for a little girl about our city. I trust it does not disappoint you. It is not very gay socially."

A smile of fine scorn played around Tib's lips. "I cannot imagine that the most worldly society woman would care for social life here. Venice itself must fill every longing."

Angelo Zanelli was surprised; he had not expected such an answer; but he was not convinced of her sincerity. "She will betray herself soon," he said to himself; "she has learned that pretty speech as a parrot would, by rote." But though he tried her with several crucial questions, and she was quite unsuspicious of his purpose, she stood her examination very well. "There is one infallible test," he said to himself. "I will take her to the gallery of the Academy and find out what pictures she likes; then I shall really know whether there is any hope for her."

The engagement was accordingly made for the following day—for Tib was only too grateful for an opportunity to view the Venetian masters under the guidance of a cultured Venetian.

Then suddenly, as he looked at her sweet

face, he forgot his purpose of coldly analyzing her intellectual powers, and said impulsively: "I suppose all our childish play under that dilapidated wharf, when we used to dig little canals in the sand and imprison crabs in lobster-pot dungeons, seems very absurd to you now; but to me that little girl in the ruffled pink sun-bonnet is a very vivid and charming memory. I have forgotten nearly everything I learned at the University of Padua, but I shall never forget the poems she taught me or our sweet childish friendship."

"Nor I, Lolo." Tib bit her lips, and wished the words back, but it was too late, they could not be recalled. It was as though a flashlight had revealed for an instant the inmost recesses of her soul, and Angelo Zanelli knew that all that dream-life of childhood held the same importance for her that it did for him, that the memory of that intimate comradeship, so long interrupted, had been cherished by her as he had cherished it, and might be taken up again, if they should find that they had not grown apart; that their tastes and sympathies, their intellectual life and moral training had not made a chasm between them so wide that no

affection could bridge. They were both thankful that the gondola had now entered the light and movement of the Grand Canal, that the contessa had awakened, and all was activity, and a joyous tumult of music and cries and laughter precluded all conversation.

The keel of the gondola grazed gently against the marble stair, and the count sprang to the doorway and assisted his mother and Tib to alight.

"Good-night, Nellie Zanelli," the contessa called merrily; but Tib froze instantly into dignity, and the good lady felt that her pleasantry was ill timed. She had not heard the little phrase, "Nor I, Lolo," or she would have been less distressed at the apparent indifference of these young people.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VENETIAN PAINTERS.

"There Titian, Tintoret, and Giambellin,
And that strong master of a myriad hues,
The Veronese, like flowers with odors keen,
Shall smite your brain with splendors; they confuse
The soul that, wandering in their world, must lose
Count of their littleness, and cry that then
The gods we dream of walked the earth like men."

J. A. Symonds.

ANGELO ZANELLI'S mind was in a tumult of doubt and perplexity. He felt strongly attracted by this enigmatical girl, but at the same time he reasoned with himself sternly on account of what he considered his infatuation. He escorted her to the Academy the next day with a foreboding of disenchantment. "She will show some depth of ignorance and bad taste," he thought, "which will make me feel

that I can never speak to her again." And so he was in no haste to begin his inquisition, for Tib was unusually pretty that morning. Winnie had hidden her battered Tam o'Shanter cap which had done duty all summer, and had lent her own broad-brimmed hat with the curling ostrich plumes. She had tied a broad, soft ribbon around Tib's graceful throat, not commenting that her color, which came and went with unusual quickness, matched its fresh tint. She had accompanied them to the gallery, but had left them seated before Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin," and had rambled off on a quest of her own after the pastel portraits of Rosalba Carriera.

Tib sat silently turning the leaves of her guide-book, and Angelo Zanelli noticed with displeasure that she did not look at the great painting. He could not understand such obtuseness—or was it perversity? She must have heard of it. Had she no interest, no curiosity even in this, one of the world's masterpieces? Finally she looked up, and her attention became instantly fixed. He watched her furtively until she came out of her day-dream, then he braced himself for a shock,

and it came, but not in the way that he had expected.

"It is such a foolish thing," she said, "to dread being disappointed, not to dare to know the real truth about any person or thing. Don't you think so?"

It seemed to Angelo Zanelli that she had read his thought, and he stammered in his embarrassment that it was often a great pleasure to find one's self mistaken.

"Is it not?" Tib replied. "I am so relieved now. I have seen so many paintings that seemed to me overpraised that when we came in I actually did not dare to look at this wonderful picture. As if Titian *could* disappoint! I am so ashamed of myself for imagining such a thing!"

The count was surprised and delighted, but was still far from suspecting that Tib's mind was as highly cultivated and as fully developed as his own; but he realized that here, at least, was an appreciative nature, capable of the highest cultivation. Without being priggish or egotistic, he took it for granted that his own abilities and acquirements were superior to hers. He fancied that hitherto she had spent her life

on the Long Island farm, without opportunities for higher education. He pitied her for this deprivation, and his soul was fired with the generous resolve to enlighten and develop her. He believed that his motives were purely philanthropic, and he set about the task at once. He led her to his favorites—the paintings of the two Bellinis, in which the Academy is so rich—the Madonnas with the Christ Child of the younger and greater brother, Giovanni, attended by saints and angels, among which are some of the most charming child faces ever painted. He explained the pictures with great pains, and was pleased by the deep admiration with which she studied them, but a little piqued by the rather amused look with which she received his somewhat elementary instruction, and by the light curiosity with which she treated the large compositions of the older brother, Gentile—those imposing backgrounds of architecture, concourses of people—especially "The Procession" and the "Miracle of the Holy Cross." She volunteered the remark that Gentile Bellini's and Carpaccio's canvases reminded her of old fashion-plates in their rendering of the costume of their day; he felt that the com-

parison was frivolous, and assured her that they were the most important of records existing concerning the architecture and life of the period—which was really not so far from what she had intended to say. She listened politely, as though she had never heard the fact before, to his information that Gentile Bellini was so highly considered that when the Sultan sent for the best painter in Venice to execute his portrait he was given the commission; and much that he told her of Carpaccio, the connecting link between these two earliest Venetian masters and the four great men who followed them, was indeed new to her.

Winnie, who had discreetly left them to themselves, reappeared after an hour. Her conscience had reproached her for the part she had played at the outset in so completely leading the count astray in his estimate of her friend, and she determined to give him every opportunity of modifying the opinion which he had formed. She found him deep in his exposition, and was rather indignant that he had occupied the time in imparting information, instead of allowing Tib to reveal anything of her true self. She yawned behind her hand, and

expressing herself as having had quite enough of pictures for one morning, insisted on returning home.

But the count had only begun to taste the delight of developing an appreciative mind, and he joined them that evening in Professor Waite's studio. It happened that for some time John Nash was the only other guest, and that he suggested that they should resolve themselves into a symposium for the clearing up of their ideas in relation to the painters whose works they were continually meeting, and that Professor Waite should be chairman.

"Yes," Tib assented. "Give us a general picture of the period, and frame the picture in with its confining dates. Let us know just which names stand for the foreground characters and which are only shadowy background adjuncts; give us the relation of the picture to its neighbors in the other cities of Italy. Then we will select the men that interest us most in the picture, and you can tell us where their best work is to be found, and we can make our pilgrimage with an intelligent purpose."

She made the request with the kindly impulse of backing up John's real thirst for in-

formation, but the count thought it a confession of her own need for instruction, and he replied enthusiastically that such a condensation of important facts, a freshening up of knowledge which had grown rusty, was just what they all needed.

"To begin with," Winnie remarked, "I wish you would tell me how to remember dates. I have no end of miscellaneous knowledge, but it is not properly pigeon-holed. Dates were always my bugbear in history."

"The dates of Venetian history are very easily grouped and remembered," the count replied. "You have only to fix in your mind that the city was founded in 400 A.D., and that the period of decline began in 1600, after which there is nothing worthy of your study, and the twelve hundred years between those dates divide and subdivide into very convenient periods. For instance, halve the twelve hundred, and you will have from 400 to 1000 A.D. six hundred years of quiet growth, and from 1000 to 1600 A.D. six hundred years of brilliant achievement. Again halve this latter period, and we find that from 1000 to 1300 A.D. we have three hundred years in which the achievements were in

war, and from 1300 to 1600 A.D. three hundred of triumphs in the arts of peace. Halve this last period of three hundred years, and we find that the first one hundred and fifty years are given to a revival of scholarship ; and the last century and a half, from 1450 to 1600 A.D., belongs to painting."

"That is rather odd," Professor Waite commented. "I never saw it stated in just that way ; but, broadly speaking, the generalization is true. The most brilliant period of Venetian art, the period which you wish to study, is framed in just that century and a half, for the Bellinis began to paint in 1450, and Veronese died in 1588, which brings us very close to 1600, and between those dates we have the entire careers of Giorgione, Tintoretto, Titian, and Paul Veronese. It was the Renaissance when all Italy was most productive in men of genius. Have you ever thought that while the entire country was divided into a large number of petty States, only two, Florence and Venice, were republics? All of the others were petty kingdoms and principalities governed by despots. It is a curious fact, too, that none of the other States, nor all of them together, produced

such great men nor so many of them as these two republics, and yet life in Florence and in Venice was very different. In Florence, under the Medici, everything was in a state of unrest and upheaval. Savonarola was openly at war with the Pope, new ideas were being discussed, and the Reformation was in the air. In politics, revolution after revolution succeeded each other. Any man might dream of becoming a prince, like Sforza, or a companion of princes, like Petrarch; and, aided by Lorenzo's magnificent patronage, and spurred by the spectacle of genius all about him, many a man did rise from very humble antecedents to a place of eminence. Everything was in ferment, and change was the order of the day. In Venice, on the contrary, everything was quiet and fixed. Its cautious policy insured the stability of its institutions. Its government had become a close and suspicious oligarchy. Power was confined to those families whose names were inscribed in the Golden Book. Executive power was gradually restricted to fewer hands, and that secrecy was secured which we are told the Venetians regarded as the highest object of government. In the fifteenth century the

Council of Ten was supreme. Perhaps Count Zanelli will explain to us how it happened that while she was a republic only in name, she should have resembled Florence in lifting to the highest eminence men of very plebeian origin, and that the most aristocratic society in Italy should have done honor to the sons of a dyer and a peasant.''

"The answer is a simple one," Angelo replied. "Venice at this time resembled a deep and placid lake walled in by the strong sluice-gates of her institutions, and apparently unruffled by the tossing tumult of the rapids, the intense current of the mill-race, or the tremendous leap of the cataract in the neighboring States. But just as the mill-pond above the dam feels the strong drawing of those silent, unseen undercurrents, which break into foam and clamor below, so Venice under her stately calm was full of the intensity of the impending change from mediævalism to modernity, and it was this strong undercurrent which kept the waters of her life pure, and differentiated the living lake from a stagnant tarn. The doge-ship of Foscari was perhaps the most luxurious era that Venice ever witnessed. She had con-

quered her pre-eminence and had not yet lost it. The princely living made possible by the accumulation of great wealth in our lordly city is reflected in the sumptuous paintings of that magnificent group of colorists to which the professor has referred. The banquets of Paul Veronese could only have been painted in a state of society where such lavish hospitality was the rule. But Venice entertained guests not only from every part of Italy, but from every part of the world. She knew what was going on in the cities about her. She discussed the ideas that were agitating Florence. She was broad-minded, ready to accept the new. The Renaissance in literature had already been embraced by her in architecture; it was rapidly changing the appearance of the city. In religion and politics the new ideas worked in a more covert way, but the new principle of the brotherhood of man was felt, and when genius appeared it was recognized and honored. But enough of the background; now kindly tell us, professor, of our four artist heroes, and first of Giorgione."

"To me Titian is the central figure in the picture," said Professor Waite, "for he lived

so long that his life covered the career of the others, and was the connecting link between them. Giorgione and Titian were fellow-students in the studio of the Bellinis. The young Tiziano, who had come down from his mountain home at Cadore, won to the study of art by the solemn majesty of nature, is thought by his biographers to have been a serious youth, 'a steady and patient worker, following all the rules and the discipline of his master, and taking into his capacious brain everything that could be taught him; whereas young Giorgione was more masterful and impatient, and with a quicker eye and insight (having so much less time to do his work in) seized upon those points in which his genius could have full play.' Giorgione (Big George), or Torzo da Castelfranco, on leaving Bellini's studio, returned to Castelfranco, but after executing a few orders, came back to Venice and took a house not far from the Rialto. It is held by some that he and Titian entered into a partnership to decorate the exterior of buildings with frescoes—they certainly worked together on the Fondaco de Tedeschi, where Tintoretto's wall was the more generally praised. Only a few

vestiges of color are left of these paintings, which, like most of the exterior mural paintings of Venice, have been destroyed by moisture. 'Giorgione' is said by one authority 'to have originated genre painting. His subjects are always charming, containing nothing base or low, and confined to very simple groups of few figures. He was also famous for his portraits. He was a great favorite in Venetian society on account of his fine presence, agreeable manners, and great skill as a musician. His nature was that of a true poet—profoundly thoughtful, yet at the same time taking an innocent pleasure in life. There are comparatively few of his paintings left us.' It was Ruskin who assured him the immortality which his works deserve, though Ruskin is not to be trusted in all of his passionate magnificent assertions. If you will hand me that unpretending little book I will read you an extract from Karl Karoly, who sums up briefly and well the life of Jacopo Robusti, called Il Tintoretto (The Little Dyer), from his father's business :

"'He worked for a short time in the studio of Titian ; but not being on good terms with his master, left after ten days. Over the door

of his studio he is said to have inscribed, as a definition of the style he preferred, "The drawing of Michael Angelo and the coloring of Titian."

"'After some years of struggle and poverty he became famous, and married Faustina, the daughter of Marco di Viscovi, a Venetian nobleman. They lived in a beautiful house in the Calle Larga (No. 3162), which is now called the Palazzo Camello. Tintoretto was of a kind and genial disposition, and something of a wit. He was very generous; and his wife, who was quite the opposite, would give him when he went out a small sum of money, and on his return required an account of how he had spent it. Tintoretto was very fond of his daughter Marietta, who worked in his studio dressed as a boy. She became very proficient as a portrait painter, and received some brilliant offers to go to the courts of Philip II. of Spain and Maximilian, but she refused to leave Venice. She married a German jeweller. To acquire a knowledge of foreshortening, Tintoretto made models in wax, which he hung up in his studio in a variety of positions, and drew them from every point of view. Tintoretto was the most

imaginative of all painters. It is only in Venice that he can properly be studied. In judging of his works, it must be remembered that he worked most rapidly and on a large scale; that he did not care what the public thought of his works, and only completed them when he felt in the humor to do so; and that he was the most unequal of all painters.

"'In many respects, Tintoretto resembled Michael Angelo, especially in savage originality and energy of will. The feverish energy of his work acquired for him the name of the "Furioso." Venice is full of the works of Tintoretto, which are now generally in a bad condition, "foul with the disfigurements of mildew, and all but invisible in the dead blackness which has crept over their splendor."'"

"It is but just that this should be explained," said Winnie, "for both Tib and I were greatly disappointed with the Scuola di San Rocco, which Ruskin calls one of the three most precious buildings in Italy, on account of the sixty-two paintings by Tintoretto with which it is decorated (the other two being the Sistine Chapel and the Campo Santo of Pisa). We were distressed at first at our own lack of

appreciation until we found that Ruskin himself admits that they were all painted for their badly lighted positions, and are for the most part nothing more than vast sketches made to produce, under a certain degree of shadow, the effect of finished pictures. Some are really finished, while others 'seem to have been painted in a couple of hours with a broom for a brush.' He describes the series in detail in his 'Stones of Venice'—all but 'The Crucifixion,' and of this he says simply, 'I must leave this picture to work its will on the spectator; for it is beyond all analysis and above all praise.'"

"We studied the 'Paradise,' too, in the Ducal Palace," said Tib, "very carefully with an opera-glass; but until Professor Waite explained the picture we could make nothing of it, and we were much consoled when we found that Taine said that all he could make out 'was a mass of figures whirling in a reddish light, which seemed that of a conflagration.'

"Walter Thornbury, in his poem on Tintoretto painting his dead daughter, makes the artist allude to his rivalry with Titian in these words:

"'That Titian's still before me in the race;
The harpies snatch this angel from my side,

And leave his proud-eyed girl with lavish hair
And great white shoulders, to enhance his pride,
And serve round sweetmeats to the senators,
Who flock to him by dozens, to hand down
To ages heedless of the boon, each vacant face,
Steeped in one dull dark fog of golden brown.

" 'He fills the churches, palaces, and halls,
'Tis he who sweeps the ducats to his lap,
He paints the emperors, cardinals, and popes;
To him the meanest boatman doffs his cap.

" 'Yet we shall meet in Paradise, and there
She'll smile to see St. Luke my withered hand
Grasp at the golden gate, while Titian takes
The lower seat. I have him on the hip.'

You may call me lacking in appreciation of the more heroic qualities, but to me Titian is the greatest *painter* of them all. His career is so wonderful, when one thinks that at thirty-five he was without a rival throughout all Europe, and the record of his work is simply incredible, even when we take into consideration the fact that he painted until his ninety-ninth year. All the great galleries of Europe appear to possess numerous examples of his works—and what a variety of subjects!—sacred and profane history, mythological legends, landscapes and por-

traits—and to me these are best of all—and how many he painted! Nearly every great potentate of Europe of the sixteenth century ordered his portrait of Titian—Charles V. several times; Philip II.; Francis I. of France; the Sultan Solyman; Popes Clement VII., Paul III., and Paul IV.; all the doges of his time; the Dukes of Urbino and Alba; the Constable de Bourbon; Andrea Doria, of Genoa; Cæsar Borgia; Count Castiglione; Cardinals Ippolito de Medici, Bembo, Sforza, and Farnese; Ariosto; Tasso; Sansovino, and many others—a complete historical gallery illustrating the time in which he lived, and all of them masterpieces. I admire him even more as a delineator of character than as a master of color. I think Ruskin does him justice for once when he says that beside the senatorial dignity of his old Venetian nobles all our modern gentlemen look poor and small, and I wonder if women were so much more beautiful in his day, so much happier than they are now, as they appear to be in his joyous paintings? What do you think, Count Zanelli?"

Angelo Zanelli had been following Tib intently as she spoke rapidly and enthusiasti-

cally. It was a revelation, and he could scarcely credit that this girl, upon whom he had looked down so patronizingly, could not only talk so well, but actually knew of what she was talking. But her direct question turned the current of his thought.

"We have one ancestral portrait, said to have been painted by Titian," he replied, "though it is not signed. It hangs between those windows; you can judge whether a man of my race might really have looked like that."

They all turned to the portrait in question—that of a very noble-looking man, past the prime of life, gowned in black, with sunken eyes and an emaciated, scholarly face.

"I do not think that Titian added any flattering touch of his own to that face," said Adelaide; "it is such a one as yours will become when you are old."

The count laughed in a forced way. "You have paid me no compliment," he said. "Do not repeat it to my mother; but there are uncanny tales told of that benevolent-looking individual; that he was an alchemist and worse, and that the motto on the scroll, 'I die that others may live,' was true, but in no good

sense. He died as a serpent dies, crushed in order that he might injure no more by his nefarious arts. It is a noble ancestry that I boast, is it not?"

He seemed so excited that Professor Waite hastened to bring the conversation back to safe and impersonal ground. "Titian was always a gentleman," he said; "he had received a learned education, and had polished manners. His wife, Cecilia, died in 1530, and his sister, Orsa, came from his birthplace, the mountain town of Cadore, to live with him in the house you visited. It was then a fashionable part of Venice, and Titian lived very luxuriously, entertaining much. He had three children—Pomponio, who was such a wild youth, even after he became a priest, that his father would not allow him to accept a bishopric which was offered him, as he was certain that he would disgrace it; Orazio, who was a scholar and an inventor (it is said an alchemist, too; so your ancestor had good company, count); and a much-loved daughter, Lavinia, whom he painted bearing a great dish of fruit, the product probably of his garden. He loved to deck her with jewels, and bought an organ

for her use. She married a gentleman of the Cadore country, and went back to live among the mountains, where her father frequently visited her. Among the noble guests whom he entertained was the Emperor Charles V. It is possible that Cæsar Borgia had his portrait in that very house, for he was in Venice for a short time with his three hundred horsemen, and the discourteous guests stole even the hangings of their beds when they left. It is said that Cæsar himself stole an altar cloth which he fancied. I have here a curious letter from one of Titian's guests—the scholar Priscianese—who, writing back to Rome, describes a dinner at Titian's house. It is such a good picture that I will read it:

"'I was invited on the 1st of August to celebrate a feast in the delightful garden of Messer Tiziano Vecelli, a most excellent painter and a person truly adapted to season with courtesies any distinguished entertainment. There were assembled with the said Messer Tiziano—as like desires like—some of the rarest geniuses which are found at present in this city, principally Messer Pietro Aretino, a new miracle of nature, and next to him Il Sansovino, almost as

great an imitator of nature with the chisel as was the master of the feast with the pencil; also Messer Jacopo Nardi and myself, so that I made the fourth among such wisdom. Here, before they set out the tables—for although the place was shady the sun still made his strength felt—the time was passed in contemplation of the lifelike figures in the excellent paintings of which the house was full, and in discussing the beauty and charm of the garden, which was a pleasure and a wonder to every one.

"'It is situated in the extreme part of Venice, upon the sea, and from it may be seen the pretty island of Murano and other beautiful places. This part of the sea, as soon as the sun went down, was filled with a thousand little gondolas adorned with beautiful women, and resounded with divers harmonies, the music of voices and instruments, which till midnight accompanied our delightful supper. In the mean while came the hour for supper, which was no less beautiful and well arranged than plentifully provided. Besides the most delicate viands and precious wines, there were all those pleasures and amusements that were appropriate to the season, the guests, and the feast. Having

just arrived at the fruit, your letter came. Finally the supper ended most pleasantly.'

"Many another supper ended in the same way at that hospitable house; but at length the plague came again to Venice, and the great artist died there quite alone. Sister Orsa was dead, Lavinia away in her mountain home, Pomponio careless, and Orazio lay dying at the same time at the public pest-house. It is said that robbers broke in and sacked the house before his dying eyes; but that is hardly credible, for no hope of plunder could have induced even a brigand to enter a plague-infected house."

"It seems as if Byron must have been thinking of Titian's house and garden," said Winnie, "when he wrote:

> "'In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
> And silent rows the songless gondolier.
> Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
> Those days are gone, but beauty still is here:
> States fall and fade, but Nature doth not die,
> Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
> The pleasant place of all festivity,
> The revel of the earth, the mosque of Italy.'"

"Oh, no!" Tib exclaimed. "I am sure that was suggested by Paul Veronese's great ban-

quet scenes, as well as this description of Venice :

" ' She looks a sea-Cybele fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers.
And such she was ; her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and at her feasts
Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased.' "

" It is very possible," said Professor Waite, who had been consulting several books and had marked some passages. " ' Paolo was the son of Gabriele Caliari, an obscure sculptor, and was born at Verona ; hence his appellation Veronese.

" ' He went to Venice about 1555. When he arrived he was already an accomplished artist, but he learned much from Titian, who held him in high esteem. He was for a time in Rome with the Venetian ambassador Grimani ; and it was on his return to Venice that his brilliant career began. Veronese was a man of amiable manners, of a liberal, generous spirit, and extremely pious.'

" Of the many descriptions of Veronese's ' Fame of Venice,' or ' Venice Enthroned ' (on

the ceiling near the 'Paradise') Taine's is the best:

"'Amid grand architectural forms of balconies and spiral columns sits Venice, the blonde, on a throne radiant with beauty, a queen whose mere rank gives the right to be happy, and whose only desire is to render those who see her happy also. On her serene head, which is thrown slightly backward, two angels place a crown. Beneath, on a balustrade, are Venetian ladies in the costume of the time—in low-neck dresses, cut square and closely fitting the body. It is actual society, and is as seductive as the goddess. There is not one who is not merely cheerful but joyous.

"It is of this painting that a poet writes:

> "'How didst thou once, Venetia, gorgeously
> Flaunt like a haughty queen in gold array,
> As Paolo Veronese painted thee!'

"His canvases are nearly always large, and his subjects incidents which admit of being rendered with pomp and magnificence. He loved to depict scenes of costly splendor, to which he gave scriptural names, but which were in reality Venetian life of the day. He painted all

subjects, even the most solemn, in the same gorgeous style. He was precisely the painter suited to a nation of successful merchants. His coloring differs from that of his great rivals in its silvery transparency. He died in 1588, and was buried in the Church of San Sebastiano.'

"Sir Joshua Reynolds justly characterized the mode of composition and execution peculiar to the Venetians as the decorative style. This involves a strange luxury of arcades, porticos, balconies, and staircases, and of rich silks and draperies, which was somewhat detrimental to the ideality of the subject.

"This completes our brief survey of the great quartette. It has certainly been a good idea to fix them distinctly in our minds while we are studying their works. It is only a superficial glance; but if we supplement it with more earnest study our time has not been lost."

"I could have said that myself to you an hour ago with the same professorial dignity and condescension," said Angelo Zanelli to Tib; "but I see now that you have really given the subject very earnest study already, and I beg your pardon for presuming hitherto to take

the tone of a tutor. You must have been laughing at my ridiculous airs. I descend from the rostrum. After this, as in the old days, when you were Nellie Zanelli and I was Lolo, when I want instruction about Venice I will come to you."

"You are wrong in thinking that I have been laughing at you," Tib began; but Winnie interrupted her.

"Indeed we have, though. It was such fun to take you in that first night here, when you imagined us two giddy, rattle-pated girls."

"So that was a little play acted for my benefit?" he asked.

"Yes; and we had begun to feel that we had acted it too well, and to wonder how we should ever gain your good opinion."

It was Tib who spoke; and the count replied:

"Teach me how to gain yours. Density such as mine has been ought not to be pardoned too easily, and should have a long penance and a hard one."

"Your penance shall be to continue your kind instruction, and believe me, Winnie and I are most grateful for this delightful introduction to Venice."

CHAPTER X.

A FESTA.

COUNT ANGELO'S penance, though it did not seem hard, was certainly a long one. The mornings were still sacred to work, but every afternoon he devoted to showing the girls some new part of Venice. Now it was some masterpiece of one of the great painters, hidden away in an obscure church—one afternoon Tintoretto's in the Church of the Madonna dell' Orto—and in the morning he even wilily suggested that he could guide them to out-of-the-way spots for their sketching, to Tintoretto's house with the carved camel over the window, to some cloistered court with a carved stone well-curb in the

centre, or to a staircase with exquisite balustrades, to one of the canopied Madonnas, or to the Giudecca with its fishing-boats and the distant spires reflected in the lagoon.

And though with each pilgrimage he obtained new insight into their character, and comprehended how little they needed his tutorship, still he did not cease his friendly ministrations, though his conversation became less didactic and lost every vestige of patronage, and the "mad pride of intellectuality." There was not much chat of any kind during these days. They simply stood silently together before the great paintings, seeming to know by intuition what the other thought about them, while Winnie filled their silences with her lightsome chatter.

Were there ever such beautiful days as those which came with the early spring? The gray, sodden clouds, which had often settled during the winter into dismal rain, rolled away in great billowing masses and crowned the Alps on the northern horizon, piling themselves in mimic mountain ranges above the real ones, leaving the dome of heaven a clear crystalline blue. They were in their gondolas all day long,

and in the clear, starlit nights, when the canals were all aglow with twinkling lights and swaying, many-colored lanterns, they followed in the wake of the serenading barges, listening to and joining in the songs.

The Church of the Salute had always charmed Tib as she watched it from their balcony, and Angelo was especially fond of it. They could both say, with Hopkinson Smith:

"This beautiful church is always my rendezvous. It is half-way to everything—to the Public Garden; across the Giudecca; away over to the Lagoon, where the fishermen live; to the Rialto and beyond. In the freshness of the morning, when its lovely dome throws a cool shadow across its piazza, there is no better place for a painter to make up his mind where he would work."

The count claimed the privilege of showing the church to the girls on the occasion of the great annual festival. They walked across the bridge of boats which was thrown across the Grand Canal.

"Salute means health, does it not?" Tib asked, looking up at the beautiful building.

"Yes," the count replied; "the convent was

built by the city of Venice on ground formerly belonging to the Knights Templars as a votive offering on the cessation of the last visit of the plague."

"How many times has the city suffered from that scourge?"

"Seventy. It is the price we pay for our close intercourse with the East. She shares with us her curses as well as her treasures. The first Crusaders brought it back with their spoils. There is hardly a Venetian family but has among its annals some tradition of tragedy connected with its ravages. Titian, painting grandly in his hundredth year, could not die until the plague struck him. Giorgione, they say, took it from the lips of his lady love. Strange to say, our own family has been spared, when, if tradition speaks the truth, we should have felt its heaviest fury."

His face was so dark that Tib did not ask him what he meant. They passed into the church and quietly watched the ceremony of lighting the tapers. Each pilgrim handed a wax candle to the attendant, who lighted it and placed it on the altar, until gradually the dusky place was all aglow.

Angelo handed a taper to the attendant and looked at Tib questioningly. "I suppose that seems to you like idolatry," he said.

"No," she replied. "I was thinking of a poem I have always loved:

> "'Now the stars are lit in heaven
> We must light our lamps on earth.
> Every star a signal given
> From the God of our new birth,
> Every lamp an answer faint,
> Like the prayer of mortal saint.'"

"Thank you," he said simply. "Let us go before it is dark into the larger sacristy and see Tintoretto's painting of 'The Marriage at Cana.'"

This subject was a favorite of Paul Veronese's, and the girls well remembered his two large paintings in the Louvre, "The Marriage at Cana" and the "Feast at the House of Simon the Leper," and Tib recalled the pictures to their guide. "It seems to me," she said, "with all due deference to your favorite master Tintoretto, that he can hardly have surpassed Veronese in this subject, for here Veronese is on his own ground—luxury of appointment, the physical enjoyment of the guests

sumptuous robes, fair women, and a general air of state, and the pride of position. If I remember rightly, there were a hundred and thirty figures in 'The Marriage at Cana,' and yet there was no effect of crowding. There was room and to spare at that great banquet, where the table groaned with gold, and each guest was served as a king."

"This picture of Tintoretto's is very differently treated," Zanelli replied. "Ruskin says it is perhaps the most perfect example which human art has produced of the utmost possible force and sharpness of shadow united with richness of local color—color as rich as Titian's, with light and shade as forcible as Rembrandt's. These are *painter* qualities rather than pictorial ones, though the picture does tell its story. See that woman in the foreground, stretching her cup across the table to show the wine in it to the astonished men opposite her? Ruskin thinks that the fourth of the female figures, counting from the Madonna, is intended for the bride, and that her face is the most beautiful that Tintoretto ever painted, with the exception of the Madonna in the 'Flight into Egypt.'"

They studied the painting until the darkness came, and then they took a gondola at the church steps, and were rowed up the canal a little distance to watch the *fresco* or out-of-door celebration of the fête.

"It was far more gorgeous in the old days," Angelo explained. "Immense sums were expended by the city on regattas and illuminations, and there was much rivalry between the two factions of the gondoliers, the blacks and the reds, while private individuals brought out their gala gondolas, gilded barges adorned with carvings and brocades, and manned by crews in beautiful and fantastic costumes."

The *fresco* this evening was a comparatively simple affair, consisting of fireworks on the Rialto. Several bouquets of rockets were sent up from the centre of the bridge, and then from under it a barge of light flashed into the middle of the stream. The barge was towed by a tug, which glided on so far in advance that it seemed to be moving of its own will. Four tall masts, from which fluttered huge gonfalons, shot up as though by magic as the barge emerged from the arch, while in the centre of the boat a magical palm-tree opened like a huge umbrella.

Each of its hundreds of pendulous fronds was tipped with an electrical light, and the entire mechanism covered the musicians, who sat beneath, as with a canopy of blazing jewels. Their gondolier dexterously eluded the other small craft that were lying in wait for the first place, and followed in the wake next to the musicians' barge.

"How enchanting it all is!" Tib exclaimed. "Some one has described such a festa as this in a little poem, part of which I can remember:

"'With music from their windows booming
Floats the voice of masque and measure,
Through distant domes and marble piles,
And hymns the jubilee of youth and pleasure.

"'Between the ripple dimly plashing,
And the dark roof looming high,
Lost in the funereal sky,
Like many-colored jewels flashing,
Small lamps in loops and rosaries of fire,
Verdant and blood-red, trembling and turning,
Yellow, blue, in the deep water burning,
From dark till dawning
Set all aglow the wide concave,
And splash and stain the marble and the nave.'

"'And high above the hum
Swelled the thunder and the hoot
Of the oboe and of viol, of the hautboy and the flute,
And the roaring of the drum.'"

With what zest the musicians sang that night! All the old favorites—"Bella Napoli," "Funicoli, funicola," "Margherita" and "Santa Lucia," and later Gordigiani's "O Santissima Vergine."

The barge made its way ponderously down the canal. Beside the musicians they could see a gentleman richly dressed in the costume of the sixteenth century. He wore a mask, so that they could not guess at his identity; but he gave directions to the singers from time to time, and they evidently sang as he requested.

"It is some wealthy young fellow," said the count, "bound on a serenading expedition. You will see that he has subsidized the captain of the steamer, and he will stop where this young prince directs and serenade some lady."

The event proved that the count had guessed correctly, for as they approached one of the stately palaces the masked gentleman called sharply, "*Sciár!*" ("Stop!") and the steamer came to a halt. The barge drifted forward slowly, and the gentleman snatched a guitar from one of the musicians, and himself sang, "Margherita," the singers joining in the refrain. The curtains of a window opening upon

the balcony fluttered apart, a beautiful face peeped out, and a hand threw a bunch of white flowers far out into the stream—not quite far enough, however, for the masked singer to catch. The flowers fell into the water at a little distance from the barge, and all in silk and velvet as he was, the serenader sprang into the canal and waved the bouquet over his head with one hand while he caught at the rope flung him from the barge with the other.

"Daisies!" exclaimed Tib. "The lady's name must be Margaret. What devotion!"

Angelo's lip curled. "What a fool!" he said.

"Perhaps so, to spoil his gay suit, unless the sly rogue knows that the lady's admiration is worth more to him than the price of his doublet. And even if you think the leap theatrical, the custom of serenading is a pretty one. We are too practical for it in America, and our young men are too afraid of appearing ridiculous."

"It *is* ridiculous," said Angelo. "I cannot imagine myself being so infatuated as to make such a fool of myself."

"That is because," said Tib, "you have

never met any one whom you loved more than you do your own dignity."

The count made no reply; and Tib asked, "What is the meaning of those cries which the gondoliers utter from time to time? '*Sciár*' is one of them."

"'*Sciár*' means 'halt,'" Angelo replied; "'*stali*,' 'look out; I am coming;' '*premé*,' 'I shall pass you.'"

"I shall always remember this *festa* of the Salute," he said, after a pause. "I love the church; it is one of the noblest examples of that style which Ruskin most unjustly despised —the Renaissance. I have a little poem which came to me in a mysterious way, which likens it to some mountain. Here it is in my pocket:

> "'Like some Greek temple pure and grave,
> With pediment and architrave—'

No, I see the author likens the mountain to a Greek temple; but some way I remembered it as the Salute."

Tib and Winnie looked conscious, and the count held the envelope on which the poem had been written close to the gondola lamp and read the address on the reverse—"Winifred De

Witt." "Why, you wrote this!" he exclaimed, much surprised.

"No," Winnie replied; "Tib scribbled it one morning on that scrap of paper and then lost it."

"And you never wondered what had become of it?"

"Certainly not," Tib replied. "It was not of enough consequence. I am glad, however, if it suggested the Salute to you, for it was the view from the balcony which called up the protest to Ruskin's assertion that classical architecture was not poetic."

The count was silent. He did not even express the admiration he felt for the little poem, for the new insight he was constantly gaining into Tib's capabilities was most disturbing to his preconceived ideas.

They had reached their own landing; but the count begged them to continue the trip, and Winnie ran in to see if Adelaide would join them. She was gone a long time, and the conversation drifted to their old child-life, and Count Angelo asked: "May I call you by your beautiful real name, Signorita Nellie? I have maintained my boyish prejudice for your family

name. I confess I do not like the name Smith, though it is a very favorite one with your countrymen. It is so hard for me to pronounce, and the little short name by which your friends call you I could not presume to use, and, indeed, I like it no better; but the Signorita Nellie fits you as the word lily suits the flower. It is perfect."

Angelo was not quite frank when he said this. Even the Signorita Nellie was not quite the name which he would have chosen. The old name which he had given her in the presumption of his childish ignorance—Nellie Zanelli—that to his mind was the only perfect name for her; but that, he had told himself, he could never ask her to bear. The name had been too deeply disgraced by the crimes of his wicked ancestor, who had brought death to Venice and shame to his descendants, for him to ask any good woman to share its heritage. And yet all this seemed so far away in the past. Must generation after generation of innocent descendants suffer for his sin? The face beside him was so sweet, so noble, the power that compelled him so subtle and irresistible, that a wild, reckless determination filled his heart. He

would be bound no longer by a dead past, but would put it out of his thoughts and declare himself a free man. Her answer should decide whether he would tell her of his love.

Tib could not guess the subject over which he was brooding, but she replied frankly: "We are certainly too good friends to be formal. I have in my trunk the little *bonbonnière* which you gave me so long ago. Do you remember, you erased the first syllable of your name on the lid that it might read Nelli?"

Tib did not look up, and did not see the look of despair which settled on Angelo's face. Here was his answer indeed. His ancestor's crimes leaped from the past to confront him just as his declaration was trembling on his lips.

"Nellie!" he exclaimed, "no one has tasted those bonbons? You are sure of it?"

"Quite sure. You told me they were probably medicine, and might be poisonous. You were very cautious even as a little boy."

"Thank God!" he replied earnestly. "I will tell you—I have much to tell you, Nellie, much that is very vitally important to me—"

But Winnie, who had obligingly delayed a

long time, now brought down word that neither Adelaide nor she cared for the gondola trip that evening, and Tib accordingly bade the count good-night and entered the house with Winnie.

"But when can I tell you?" Angelo asked eagerly.

"To-morrow morning on the balcony," Tib replied; and Winnie could not forbear pinching her arm as they mounted the stairs together. "Ah! ha!" she teased, "there is something to be told, and we make appointments on the balcony. I must be there to chaperone you, my dear."

"I shall be very glad of your company," Tib replied; but there was a demure smile about the corners of her mouth which made Winnie sceptical. "I have just come across a pretty poem on serenading in Venice," she said, and she read it aloud to Tib as the latter combed her long hair.

"When along the light ripple the far serenade
Has accosted the ear of each passionate maid,
She may open the window that looks on the stream,
She may smile on her pillow and blend it in dream;
Half in words, half in music it pierces the gloom.
'I am coming, *stali*, but you know not for whom,
Stali, not for whom!'

'Now the tones become clearer, you hear more and more
How the water divided returns on the oar.
Does the prow of the gondola strike on the stair?
Do the voices and instruments pause and prepare?
Oh! they faint on the ear as the lamp on the view,
'I am passing, *premê*, but I stay not for you!
Premê, not for you!'

"Then return to your couch, you who stifle a tear,
Then awake not, fair sleeper, believe he is here;
For the young and the loving no sorrow endures,
If to-day be another's, to-morrow is yours!
May the next time you listen your fancy be true,
'I am coming, *sciár*, and for you and to you,
Sciár, and to you!'"

As Winnie ceased reading, the sound of distant music drifted in at the open window. It was the barge returning. It would have been so easy for the count to have waylaid it and made the musicians serenade them. It seemed to Winnie that, after what had been said, if he really cared to give Tib pleasure this idea would have occurred to him; and throwing her arm around Tib, she drew her to the window. But the man at the helm of the little steamer shouted "*premé!*" to the gondoliers in front of the palace, and the barge, with its gay lights and music, had passed on.

CHAPTER XI.

VIOLANTE—TWO ON A BALCONY.

LATE hours were the exception for Tib and Winnie, and it was not surprising that they overslept the next morning, and were only awakened by Adelaide knocking at their door and demanding whether they were going with Professor Waite to paint Violante in her picturesque home.

"There!" exclaimed Tib, "I had forgotten all about Violante."

"So had I," yawned Winnie. "Suppose we do not go."

"I would not miss her for anything," Tib replied, hurrying with her toilet.

"But how about that appointment on the balcony for a chat with Count Zanelli?"

"I am sorry, but he will excuse me. I can see him any time, and I want to read the letters that Violante promised to show me. I can see Professor Waite putting his sketching kit into the gondola. I haven't even time to write a note of explanation. It is too bad; but I don't believe Count Angelo will be vexed."

"No fear of that, for it is too late for me to think of getting ready; so I will keep your appointment for you and be your letter of apology."

"How good of you!" Tib exclaimed gratefully; and, with a parting kiss, she was gone.

"I have missed a chance at painting the best model in Venice," Winnie grumbled to herself; and indeed it was a privilege to paint from Violante.

Tib had caught sight of her first on her way to the Church of Santa Maria Formosa, whither she was going to see Palma Vecchio's masterpiece, the noble "St. Barbara." Her attention was drawn to the girl simply as a shapely figure, a black shawl draping the head and shoulders and silhouetting the dignified carriage against the sunny walls as she flitted

along in front of them like a guiding will-o'-the-wisp.

"How well she composes!" Winnie had said. "I wish she would stand still and let me sketch her, leaning over the parapet of that bridge, or simply making the blackest black in any one of those shifting street views."

"I wonder whether her face is as interesting as her figure," Tib queried; but she had no opportunity of judging, for the girl never looked back, and kept ahead of them all the way, gliding into the church and losing herself in its gloom.

Once within, they speedily forgot her in their admiration of the "St. Barbara," the central figure of a large picture painted as a votive offering for the bombardieri or artillerists. Santa Barbara, their guide-book told them, was the patroness of soldiers, who came here to worship at her shrine. It was easy to see how St. Sebastian, who was in the same picture, and looked as though he had served as a target for a corps of crack arquebusiers, might have been adopted as their patron; but why the gentle Barbara should have been represented with cannon at her feet, a bow in hand, and a

spiky iron crown on her fair head was quite incomprehensible. The legend of her life explained her attribute—a tower with three windows. She was the daughter of Diascorus, of Heliopolis, who shut her up in a tower so that she should not attract suitors by her beauty. She was converted by a disciple of Origen, sent to her as a physician. The fact of her conversion to Christianity became known to her father when some repairs were being made in her tower, Santa Barbara wishing three windows, "as a symbol of the Trinity," to be inserted instead of two.

The girls read the extracts from various authors in praise of this picture and agreed with them all.

"An almost unique presentation of a hero-woman, standing in calm preparation for martyrdom, with the expression of a mind filled with serious conviction," wrote George Eliot. "Her shape is grandiose and queenly; her beauty healthy, serene, and plump. The glance, the massive hair, the full neck and throat are all regal; her hands are those of a queen," say Crowe and Cavalcascelle. Mrs. Jameson gives one of the best descriptions :

"She wears a tunic or robe of a rich warm brown, with a mantle of crimson; and a white veil is twisted in her diadem among the tresses of her pale golden hair. I never saw a combination of color at once so soft, so sober, and so splendid. Cannon are at her feet, and her tower is seen behind. Beneath, in front of the altar, is a marble bas-relief of her martyrdom; she lies headless on the ground, and fire from heaven destroys the executioners."

Winnie felt that Yriarte gave the best summing up of all when he wrote: "She has the noble serenity of a saint who is yet a woman."

"We should have come here at the fête of this church in February," whispered Winnie; "it is connected with that pretty legend of the 'Brides of Venice,'" and she pointed to the historical information in their guide-book that "on the 21st of February, 944, a number of Venetian maidens who had gone to be married at St. Pietro, in Castello, taking with them their dowries, were carried off by a sudden inroad of pirates. They were pursued and vanquished by the Venetians, owing to the brave cabinet-makers of Santa Maria Formosa, who asked as their sole reward that the doge should

visit their church on that anniversary every year. 'But if it rains?' said the doge. 'We will give you hats to cover you.' 'But if I am thirsty?' 'We will give you to drink.' Hence dated the Festa delle Marie, which was always held in this church on February 2d. First twelve and afterward three poor maidens were always dowered here by the city on that day, when the doge always came in state to the church and received from the priests two hats of gilt straw, two flasks of malvasia, and two oranges."

Leaving the church, the girls paused at the left of its west front to admire a beautiful Gothic canopy of the fourteenth century over the entrance to a bridge called the Ponte del Paradiso, and then directed Tribolo to take them home, for Professor Waite had invited them to paint in his studio from one of the handsomest of Venetian models who was to pose for him. As Tribolo moored their gondola at the palace door, they saw passing up the staircase the same black-draped figure which had preceded them on their way to the church; and when they entered the studio she had thrown back her shawl and was taking her place

on the model's stand. Tib uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Why, it is St. Barbara herself!"

The girl smiled, evidently flattered.

"You see the resemblance then?" said the professor. "I think it rather striking myself, and am making a study of her in the pose of the Barbara. Other artists have done so before me—for Violante draws the attention of her patrons to the resemblance if they do not discover it for themselves. She comes of a long line of artists' models, and claims that the model that sat for Palma Vecchio's masterpiece was her ancestress. It may be so. There is no harm in believing it."

The girl's quick ear had caught the word Palma Vecchio, and she smiled again and said in Italian: "Violante, daughter of Palma, my many-times great-grandmother."

"What! daughter as well as model?" Tib asked.

The girl nodded confidently. "Palma Vecchio's daughter Violante was very beautiful; her father painted her; Giorgione, Titian, all the great artists of that time painted her, and whoever painted her loved her; but she loved

only Giorgione, and she killed him, for she had the plague and he kissed her, and of that kiss he died."

"There is a tradition to that effect," Professor Waite assented; "but it is almost too romantic to be true."

"It was sad and yet sweet that the two lovers should die together," Tib said.

"But they did not die at the same time," the girl replied. "Violante recovered; she was cured by a magician—that is, by a Venetian physician who was burned as a wizard—for it was believed that he cured his patients by the black art at the expense of their souls. A friar who had taken Giorgione's dying confession had sprinkled him with holy water, and so his soul was safe; and this man, while pretending to be engaged in prayer, watched the physician, and was convinced, from his strange proceedings, that he meant harm and not good to his patient."

"That illustrious Violante is most famous," said the professor, "not because she may have been Palma's daughter or Giorgione's love, which is hardly possible, but because Titian painted her. There are no such superb physi-

cal types among the Venetian ladies of to-day; perhaps there were few at that time; at any rate, Titian was fortunate to have found her, and she to have been found by Titian."

Violante seemed a little piqued that Professor Waite should have doubted any part of her family history. "Yes," she replied, "Titian painted her oftenest, for he lived longest. We have a sketch he gave her, and letters—many letters—from all of those artists. I am not lying; the young ladies can see for themselves—letters from Titian and two very long letters from Titian's son Orazio. We have been offered a great deal of money for them; but we know better than to sell them. The young ladies can see them, however, if they will come to my poor house."

"Your house is not a poor one," Professor Waite replied. "I know it very well; its court is one of the most picturesque places for sketching in Venice. We will all descend upon you next Wednesday."

And so the appointment was made which Tib was so anxious to keep, and Winnie was left for the interview with Count Angelo. "Just as if," Winnie said to herself, rather crossly,

"it was of no more consequence and one requiring less personal attention than an appointment with a dressmaker."

Winnie was vexed with Tib's apparent indifference, and because, in all the intercourse between her and Angelo, intimate as it had become, there was no hint of love-making. It seemed to her that they were admirably fitted for one another; and she contrived many little plots to throw them together, giving them beautiful opportunities for uninterrupted conversation; and she raged inwardly when she ascertained how poorly they were improved.

"Was anything so maddening?" she complained to Adelaide one afternoon. "Here I made up a fictitious headache and denied myself the pleasure of a trip to San Giorgio yesterday on purpose that the count should have Tib all to himself, and what did that provoking girl do? Simply insisted that his mother should go with them."

"Just like her," Adelaide replied; "and last Thursday, when I really had some hopes—for Tib was sitting quite alone in the tented divan and the count made his way straight to her the moment he entered the room—you

should have seen how I labored to keep people away from them. I even entertained John Nash for an hour, for the good, stupid fellow was possessed to join them, and I was simply obliged to order Professor Waite to take the contessa out upon the balcony, for each was persistently determined to interrupt the *tête-à-tête*. It is too vexatious. The recipe for a happy marriage used to be: 'A young woman. A young man. Congenial tastes. Opportunity.' Now, here are all the ingredients; why don't they fall in love in the good old-fashioned way?"

"They are in love," Winnie replied, "only the blessed innocents haven't found it out. They have too many congenial tastes, and are so taken up with discussing them and discovering new ones that they haven't time for anything else. Somebody ought to enlighten them before those golden hours of opportunity are gone."

It was with this benevolent intention that Winnie met Angelo on the balcony that morning. She was surprised to see that he looked haggard and unhappy, for he had passed a sleepless night, vainly puzzling over the old papers regarding his ancestor's trial.

When Tib had referred to the *bonbonnière*, the conviction had struck him like a blow that he had been letting himself drift all these pleasant days as though he had a right to win her friendship, and had recklessly disregarded the chains by which he was held. It was time for him to tear himself away while he had any will power left. To strengthen his resolve, on bidding the girls good-night he went at once to the alchemist's laboratory and plunged into a study of the record of his trial. If Giovanni Zanelli had really committed the crime for which he was convicted, Angelo felt that his punishment was just. He had never studied the evidence closely, fearing that the slight hope which he still cherished of his ancestor's innocence might be crushed forever; but now he determined to face the truth.

Only one witness had appeared in behalf of the accused, Orazio Vecelli, the son of Titian, the great painter. Orazio had declared at the peril of his life that he had studied medicine with Dr. Zanelli, and had found him a most humane and honorable man, devoted to the saving of life, and that it was impossible that he could have committed any of the crimes

with which he was charged. He asserted that the stranger who had come from Constantinople, and was supposed to be the Sultan's emissary, was a Greek physician named Chrysolarus, who had come to learn Dr. Zanelli's secret of treating the plague, and having learned it had fled away in fear of his life on the arrest of his master. That he, Orazio, being too young a pupil, had not learned this secret; but if Chrysolarus could be found he could disclose it.

Orazio's testimony, though well meaning, really proved nothing except that Dr. Zanelli was a man to command the love and respect of those who knew him. Another prominent name had figured in the trial—that of Jacopo Sansovino, the architect. He stood boldly forth as the friend of the accused, and labored with all his might, though fruitlessly, to obtain an acquittal. Angelo turned hopelessly from this study. If these dear friends had been unable to prove the innocence of Dr. Zanelli, how could he, at this distance of time, hope to discover any new light? The fact remained that he had been tried and found guilty, and that in all these years nothing had been dis-

covered to prove that his sentence had not been just.

Angelo therefore kept his appointment with Tib weighed down by a feeling of profound despair. When Winnie met him and explained that she was the bearer of her friend's apologies he was really grateful.

"It does not matter at all," he said hastily—"that is, you will do quite as well. Did the Signorita Nellie send me a *bonbonnière* by you?"

"No," Winnie replied, much surprised by his evident relief. "What *bonbonnière?*"

"It is not of the slightest consequence—I mean that is the only thing of any consequence. I hope the Signorita Nellie will return me the *bonbonnière*. I have particular reasons for wanting it."

"And is this all you wished to say to Tib at this time?"

"Yes, it is all I could have said to her; but I can ask your advice. I can tell you what I am not at liberty to tell her. I love the Signorita Nellie."

"Indeed! And why, may I ask, can you not tell her so?"

"Because with that declaration I cannot ask her to be my wife."

Winnie drew herself up proudly. "Then you are quite right in not telling her that you love her. But I do not understand why you cannot ask her to marry you."

"No, you cannot understand; and I am ashamed to tell you. It is a question of ancestry; it is because I am a Zanelli."

Winnie's eyes flashed fire. She entirely misunderstood the count. She thought he meant to imply that because he was of noble descent he could not marry a girl without a title. "I always did despise dukes and earls, counts and barons," she said to herself. "Nobility! pooh! there is nothing noble about them. I wouldn't change my Van's little finger for the whole crew; but I did think that Angelo Zanelli was made of better stuff."

"I do not share your point of view, Count Zanelli," she replied with fine scorn. "I do not see any difference in your ancestry. So far as I know it, you are both descended from honorable people; and even if you were not, I do not see that your dead-and-gone ancestors, with all their nobility and grandeur, all their pride

and wealth, all of their honors and distinctions, or even their virtues or their sins, have anything to do with you two who are living in the actual present. To me ancestry is no more than a tapestry background, just as shadowy and unreal. The vital question is, what you are personally, and no nobility conferred in past ages can make you noble, Count Angelo, if you yourself are little and base, just as you are not responsible for the sins of any of those illustrious signors."

Winnie had expected that the count would be crushed by this magnificent speech, and she was much surprised when he seized her hand, exclaiming: "Do you think so? do you really think so? Would the Signorita Nellie have spoken as you have done?"

"I am sure that the fact that you are the Count Zanelli has never had the slightest bearing on her opinion of you."

"I thank you! I thank you with all my heart! You do not know what a weight you have taken from my mind."

Winnie was more and more mystified; it seemed to her that Count Angelo was going insane.

"I confess I do not understand you at all," she said coldly.

"No," he replied more calmly, "you do not understand the situation; and perhaps when you do you will not speak as you have done. My inheritance from my ancestors is one of disgrace. Gladly would I exchange my name and title for that of the meanest peasant of honest lineage. I am descended from a man who was executed here in Venice for his crimes."

Winnie had not suspected anything of this kind, and the shock staggered her. "Was he really a criminal?" she asked.

"Ah! that I do not know. It seems to me that it was not proved."

"Then, if I were you, I would leave no stone unturned to clear his memory."

"Then you think that the disgrace of being executed is nothing if the sentence were unjust?"

"How can any one think otherwise? The disgrace lies in the crime, not in the punishment."

"And if I could prove that my ancestor were really innocent, could I go to the Signorita Nellie and ask her to be the wife of a man de-

scended from one who died under the hand of the executioner, and whose body was burned by the Church?"

"And even if you cannot prove him innocent," Winnie cried, "go just the same. I do not take back a word I have said. What does his guilt matter to you?"

"Much," Angelo replied, shaking his head sadly. "If I were the descendant of a leper I would not be free to marry. I would fear that the terrible disease would break out at any time. If I am of a race morally diseased, must I not fear that I too have that moral taint?"

"No," Winnie replied; "I do not believe in heredity to such an extent as that. Taints die out in time, just as infections cannot last forever. It is as little likely that you could feel an impulse to crime as that the plague will revisit Venice in these modern times, when we understand so much better the laws of life. But, mind you, what I have said in the way of encouragement is only my view of the case so far as you personally are concerned. I know nothing whatever of Tib's feelings in the matter; and if I knew, should not tell you."

"And I shall never ask you," Angelo re-

plied ; " and I shall ask her myself just as soon as I can prove that the name which I shall offer her is an honorable one ; and meantime I trust you to keep my secret."

Winnie nodded approvingly. " Count Angelo, you are more really noble than I thought. I shall respect your confidence sacredly, and meantime I wish you Godspeed in your quest."

When Tib returned at noon she found Winnie alone upon the balcony. " What did Count Angelo wish ?" she asked. " Was he vexed because I did not keep my promise ?"

" Not at all ; he said it was of no consequence whatever ; he merely wished to ask you for a certain *bonbonnière.*"

A shade of annoyance crossed Tib's face. " I wonder why he wishes me to return it. He gave it to me when we were children. Did he give any reason why he wanted it back ?"

" None whatever."

" Well, he shall have it ; and I hope, Winnie, that this little incident relieves your mind of any suspicion that Count Angelo cares for me in the slightest degree, or that there ever could be any romance between us."

Winnie smiled, but said nothing.

"Are you convinced? Answer me!"

"Convinced! Oh, perfectly."

"Then stop smiling in that foolish way, and never allude to the subject again. I have had such an interesting day. You really have missed a great deal. There is the sketch that I made of Violante. She is a lace-maker, and here is a pair of cuffs of real Venetian point which I have brought you."

"You extravagant girl! Why, they match the collar I bought at Burano."

"Yes; that is why I was tempted; and do you know why they match it? Violante never took her eyes off of that collar when she was posing here the other day. I wondered why she stared at you in that fascinated way. It was the pattern, not your face, that attracted her, and she made the cuffs from memory."

"And the letters?"

"The letters were in old Italian, which I could not read very well; but I believe they are genuine. There is one from the architect Sansovino and two long ones from Titian's son Orazio, and what is rather singular is that in each the name Zanelli appeared. I wish I knew what Zanelli it was."

CHAPTER XII.

A RAY OF LIGHT—THE RENAISSANCE PALACES.

THOUGH Angelo had spoken of the possibility of proving the innocence of his ancestor, he could see no way of doing so. He consulted one of the most expert lawyers in Venice, who agreed to look into the matter thoroughly, and to advise him if there was anything which he could do. While he waited for the opinion of this man, Angelo felt that he must occupy himself intensely or that he would go mad; and he applied himself more unremittingly than ever to his work on Venice. Only a few chapters remained to be written, and these were to be devoted to the last great period of

Venetian architecture, that of the Renaissance. He buried himself in his study and plunged into his work.

As he arranged the illustrations for the first part of the book, their merit grew upon him—not the technical excellence alone—the neatness of the drawing, the exactness of measurement and proportions, betraying an educated eye, while the perfection of line showed a certainty of touch and facility of practice, and also an artistic freedom in the handling, a perception in the choice of subject, and a poetic treatment, the gloomy history of certain buildings being suggested by choice of lighting, so as to bring out their salient characteristics. The artist had silhouetted massive forms darkly against moonlit skies, and had given a touch of tenderness in clinging vines to decayed grandeur, thus bringing out just the important points and artfully suppressing the inconsequent and the incongruous.

"John Nash has more than the mere skill of a good draughtsman," he said to himself; "he is a poet and a true artist. It is time that his incognito should be given up." And the count wrote as follows:

"MY DEAR FRIEND: I have respected your desire to remain unknown, not only refraining from endeavoring to penetrate the flimsy disguise which you have thrown over your work, but long after you betrayed your secret I have hidden from you the fact that I knew the identity of the artist who furnished me with such beautiful illustrations. But the time has come on both sides for frank confession. Our business relations demand this. Our publisher insists that you shall have the credit for your work, and that the book shall have the prestige of your name.

"Let us, then, end this pretence of an incognito. The last chapters can be completed much more successfully with mutual help. Let us consult each other, visit places of interest together, and advise each other in regard to the incidents and places which it is best to treat. Meet me, therefore, at Professor Waite's studio to-morrow. Until then and always I remain, with the highest admiration for your talent, your obliged friend and servitor,

"ANGELO ZANELLI."

The count sealed this letter and sent it di-

rectly to John Nash, who was stupefied with surprise, but carried it to Professor Waite for explanation. The professor laughed heartily and divulged the secret. "The count is right," he said; "the joke has been carried far enough. It is time for an explanation all around. As you see, this letter begins simply 'My dear friend.' I will enclose it in a new envelope addressed to Miss. Smith, and she can imagine that Zanelli has guessed the truth, and we will enjoy the *dénouement.*"

Tib did so understand the letter, and kept the appointment. As the count entered the room he bowed to her with grave courtesy. "I expected to find our friend John Nash here," he said as he looked about the room.

"Then have I mistaken your appointment?" Tib asked, unfolding his letter, which the count recognized at once, while an expression of blank astonishment swept over his face.

"Did you?—are you?—no, it cannot be," he exclaimed, turning helplessly to Professor Waite, who replied:

"Acknowledge the joke, Count Zanelli. Miss Smith is the artist of the pen-and-ink drawings which you have admired so heartily."

Angelo stammered his apologies, which Tib accepted graciously, though Winnie mischievously assured him that it would be long before he heard the last of his mistake. Angelo hardly heard Winnie's jibes. He had not intended to allow himself the privilege of Tib's sweet companionship until he could ask for a still higher boon; but tricky Fate had forced it upon him, and he could but accept it. His gondola was waiting at the door for an excursion to which he had intended to invite John Nash. He had brought a number of books which he intended to look over with him, and there was nothing for him to do but to invite Tib's attention to them.

"I might have guessed," he said, "as they seated themselves at the large table, "that the writer of the lines on Renaissance architecture which I liked so much knew something of it practically."

"Very little," Tib replied. "I have read Ruskin of course, and I could but feel that his scorn of the style was unjust. And I wish you would tell me why he was so prejudiced."

"Ruskin's aversion to Renaissance architecture," the count explained, "was based on

what that architecture expresses, and the two elements which he feels most keenly in its spirit are Pride and Infidelity. It is the 'architecture which most nearly becomes a science,' and Ruskin feels that in doing so it becomes less of an art. He asserts too broadly that the one main purpose of the Renaissance artists was to show how much they knew. 'All other architectures,' he declares, 'have something in them that common men can enjoy—quaint fancy, rich ornament, bright color, something that shows a sympathy with men of ordinary minds and hearts. But the Renaissance is rigid, cold, inhuman. Whatever excellence it has is refined, high trained, and deeply erudite—a kind which the architect well knows no common mind can taste.' He proclaims, 'You cannot feel my work unless you study Vitruvius. I am a learned man. All the pleasure you can have in anything I do is in its rigid formalism, its perfect finish, its cold tranquillity. I do not work for the vulgar, only for the men of the Academy and the court.'

"The pride which the Renaissance architecture displayed, according to our critic, was not alone the pride of the architect in his science,

but a baser kind of pride as well, that of state, for the architect ministered to the pride of his patron. Renaissance architecture he feels was full of insult to the poor in its every line. 'It would not be built of the materials at the poor man's hand; it would not roof itself with thatch or shingle and black oak beams; it would not wall itself with rough stone or brick; it would not pierce itself with small windows wherever they were needed; it would not niche itself wherever there was room for it in the street corners. It would be of hewn stone; it would have its windows, and its doors, and its stairs, and its pillars in lordly order and of stately size; it would have its wings, and its corridors, and its halls, and its gardens as if all the earth were its own. But it understood the luxury of the body: the terraced and scented and grottoed garden, with its trickling fountains and slumbrous shades; the spacious hall and lengthened corridor for the summer heat; the well-closed windows and perfect fittings and furniture for defence against the cold; and the soft picture and frescoed wall and roof.' But this modern luxury or comfort Ruskin contemns in comparison with the 'twisted

traceries, and deep-wrought foliage, and burning (stained glass) casements of Gothic windows, when the tapestries swayed in the wind in the baron's hall.'"

"All that sounds very romantic," Tib commented, "but it does not keep pace with the march of civilization, which demands comfort, and sanitation, and elegance rather than barbaric picturesqueness."

"You have the idea exactly," Angelo replied; "and Ruskin could not deny this, or refuse the tribute of a certain appreciation of the Renaissance style. Listen to what he wrote of the Grimani palace:

"'Of all the buildings in Venice later in date than the final additions to the Ducal Palace, the noblest, beyond all question, is the Post Office (now the Court of Appeals), still known to the gondolier by its ancient name, the Casa Grimani. It is composed of three stories, of the Corinthian order, at once simple, delicate, and sublime; but on so colossal a scale that the three-storied palaces on its right and left only reach to the cornice which marks the level of its first floor. Nor is the finish of its details less notable than the grandeur of

their scale. There is not an erring line nor a mistaken proportion throughout its noble front; the decoration is sparing but delicate; the first story simpler than the rest in that it has pilasters instead of shafts; but all with Corinthian capitals rich in leafage and fruited delicately; the rest of the walls flat and smooth, and the mouldings sharp and shallow, so that the bold shafts look like crystals of beryl running through a rock of quartz. This palace is the principal type at Venice, and one of the best in Europe of the central architecture of the Renaissance schools—that carefully studied and perfectly executed architecture to which those schools owe their principal claims to our respect, which became the model of most of the important works subsequently produced by civilized nations.' ''

"What do you consider the finest Renaissance building in Venice?" Tib asked.

"I agree with Hare," Angelo replied, "in thinking that the Libreria Vecchia, on the west side of the Piazzetta, is the finest building of the sixteenth century in Venice. It is the masterpiece of Jacopo Tatti, called Sansovino, in 1536, and is mentioned by Aretino as '*superiore*

all' invidia.' The foundation of the library was the collection of Petrarch, who came to settle in Venice in 1529, and made 'St. Mark the heir of his library.' You must see the great hall. It is very handsome, and contains paintings by Paul Veronese and two great works of Tintoretto—'The Body of St. Mark Stolen from the Saracens' and 'St. Mark Rescuing a Sailor.' Between the windows are a row of philosophers, which Ruskin describes as the finest thing of the kind in Europe. Adjoining the palace and facing the lagoon is the Zecca, or mint, also built by Sansovino. It gave its name to the zecchino or sequin, the favorite coin of the republic, of the same value as the ducat, which derived its name from the word *ducatus* (duchy)."

"When Shylock laments his lost ducats, I always wondered how much they were worth in our money," said Tib.

"About six shillings now, but nine in the time of Shakespeare."

"Tell me more, please, about Sansovino. He was the chief architect of the Renaissance, was he not?"

"Hardly. We must concede that honor to

Bramante, who began St. Peter's at Rome, and built the great galleries of the Vatican ; but he never came to Venice, and perhaps Sansovino would not have done so if he had not been driven away by the sack of Rome. Fortunate it was for our city that he sought refuge here. He was first employed in restoring the cupola of San Marco, which he did so successfully that he was given a governmental position with a house and a salary. Then he turned his attention to beautifying the Piazza. He turned out the market, with its butchers' and greengrocers' stalls, built the library and façade of the Procurazie and the classic Colonnade which gives the Piazza its distinction. Many of the palaces which he built are still standing. I want to take you to the Palazzo Delfino, the Palazzo Moro, the Palazzo Garzoni, the Palazzo Corner della Ca' Grande, and the Palazzo Tiepolo. His architecture was all good construction. It was Palladio who built façades which were only masks, whose dignified exterior did not express the real arrangement of the petty stories which they concealed."

"Then that is why the term Palladian archi-

tecture has come to mean something very grandiose, but not sincere."

"Exactly. The Church of the Redentore is the best example of Palladio's style. I would like to show you the difference between the buildings of these two architects, and you will understand then why Ruskin disliked the later Renaissance, with its overloading of meaningless ornament, and why I admire the earlier period, with its severe classicism."

And so it came about that their intimacy was strengthened, and that the count's resolutions to hold himself quite aloof were swept away. Everything and everybody seemed to conspire to throw them together. They visited not only Sansovino's palaces, but others of this period—the Palazzo Baffo, in the Campo St. Maurizio, decorated by Paul Veronese; the Palazzo Mocenigo, where Lord Byron lived; the Vendramini Palace, a magnificent specimen of the Renaissance style and beautifully restored. Ruskin speaks of it as "well maintained and noticeable as having a garden beside it rich with evergreens and decorated by gilded railings, and white statues that cast long streams of snowy reflection down into the deep water."

Many titled personages have occupied the Vendramini Palace, but its noblest guest was Richard Wagner, who died there in 1883.

The Palazzos Papadopoli and Corner Spinelli were both good examples of the style; but, after the Grimani, Tib liked best the Palazzo Pesaro. These Renaissance palaces were frequently richly frescoed. Tib visited several whose interiors might have served Howells for this description of one which he does not name:

"We entered its coolness and dampness, and wandered up the wide marble staircase, past the vacant niches of departed statuary, and came on the third floor to a grand portal, and we were aware that we stood upon the threshold of our ruinous noble's great banqueting hall, where he used to give his magnificent *feste da ballo*. Lustrissimo was long gone, with all his guests, but there in the roof were the amazing frescoes of Tiepolo's school which had smiled down on them as now they smiled on us; great piles of architecture, airy tops of palaces swimming in summer sky, and wantoned over by a joyous populace of divinities of the lovelier sex, that had nothing but their loveliness to clothe them and keep them afloat; the whole

grandiose and superb beyond the effect of words, and luminous with delicious color. How it all rioted there with its inextinguishable beauty in the solitude and silence, from day to day, from year to year, while men died and systems passed, and nothing remained unchanged but the instincts of youth and love which inspired it. It was music and wine and wit; it was so warm and glowing that it made the sunlight cold; and it seemed ever after a secret of gladness and beauty that the sad old palace was keeping in its heart."

It seemed to Tib and Winnie that they knew the fair dames who had revelled in this great ball-room, for they had copied many of the charming pastels of Rosalba Carriera,* who has left such an exquisite record of the noble ladies of Venice.

It was the gayest, maddest period of Venetian society, while already premonitions of the downfall of Venetian supremacy were to be discerned by the thoughtful, but were disregarded by those in power. Tib studied the period with great delight; and the two figures which

* For a sketch of the life and work of this artist, see "Witch Winnie at Versailles."

interested her most were Titian and Sansovino. She found that the latter, with all his busy career as an architect, found time also for sculpture. There is a lovely Madonna of his over the door of San Marco; and the bronze doors of its sacristy, which he designed, are works of great genius. Leader Scott sums up his career with this fitting tribute:

"So in a life of constant industry, Sansovino passed nearly a century of usefulness, loved by all who were near to him, and esteemed by the illustrious men of his age. At the time when he used to sit among the flowers in Titian's waterside garden, he was a venerable old man with a long white beard, which in his youth had been auburn. He was upright, handsomely dressed, and dependent neither upon spectacles nor walking-staff. Upright in character as well as body, he never broke his word nor deceived a living soul; quick to anger, he was also quick to make amends, and none ever suffered an injustice from him. After such a life, death touched him gently. Feeling weary one day, as at ninety-three a man might well do, he laid down to repose, and after a short time of calm rest, without pain, he passed away."

All that Tib learned of Sansovino and his work interested her so much that she determined to ask Violante to let her copy his letter, that she might ask the count to help her translate it; but they were so busy with their studies that she never carried out this intention.

The book was finished at last, written and illustrated and sent to the printer, and each realized that their pleasant days of companionship were ended. Tib accepted the situation very quietly. If she had learned to enjoy this co-operative study more than her solitary painting, she did not confess it even to herself, but went back to her former work very cheerfully.

Not so Angelo. His work was finished; and, with nothing to occupy his thoughts, and this delightful comradeship at an end, he was doubly bereft. He thought of a dozen schemes for study which they might pursue together, but he was too honest to propose them. He knew that they were only subterfuges to enjoy her society, which, according to the conditions which he had set himself, he could not honorably do. His lawyer had reported that he had made every research possible, and that there was no possibility of proving that Giovanni

Zanelli had been judicially murdered, unless the Greek Chrysolarus had left some written statement, or if it could be proved by the written statement of other witnesses that Chrysolarus was not sent by the Sultan, but was in reality a student of medicine, and that the practices of Dr. Zanelli were all in the legitimate line of his profession. The lawyer had caused inquiries to be made in Constantinople and in Athens for any persons by the name of Chrysolarus, hoping to be able to learn something of this mysterious man through his descendants, but so far all of these researches had been utterly without success. For days Angelo brooded over the matter, reasoning in a circle and always coming back to the same walled door.

The others noticed his depression, but no one but Winnie had any clew as to its cause. "He is acting Hamlet all to himself," she thought, "and is so overwrought thinking of a past tragedy that he is creating one for himself in the present. I will have another talk with him and see if I can't straighten him out."

Even as this benevolent resolve formed itself in Winnie's mind, Angelo tapped at her door.

"Please step out on the balcony," he said. "I have something very important to tell you."

Winnie obeyed the summons. The count held a newspaper crumpled in his hand and was strangely excited. "You told me," he said, "if I could not prove my ancestor innocent to disregard the possibility of any inherited taint and go to the Signorita Nellie as though I were affected in no way by the doings of my race."

"I told you that I believed such taints could be overcome by one's own effort, and that they faded away entirely in time. So that you would probably never feel any temptation whatever to crime, but only the more abhorrence for it because it once existed in your family."

"You used a remarkable simile to enforce what you said," the count continued. "It was, you thought, as impossible that I should feel such an impulse as that in these latter days, when we understand the laws of life so well, the plague should revisit Venice."

"Yes," replied Winnie; "I think that the one is as little possible as the other. The con-

ditions for moral and physical disease have alike changed. Think how different are our ideas on sanitation—the great preventive of disease—and you are morally different, finer and stronger, than a man even of your own race could have been three centuries ago."

Angelo laughed. "Yes, the conditions have all changed," he said. "Nothing is the same except good and evil, life and death, love and despair. And in spite of all the improvement I *am* the descendant of a criminal. And—the plague is raging in India and is very likely to revisit Venice."

He handed her the paper, and to her surprise she saw that his words were true.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she exclaimed; "so sorry that I used so unfortunate an illustration. But do not lay too much stress upon that. Tell Tib all about it. Let her decide. It is not fair to her not to do so. You are not the only one concerned. Her judgment may be better than yours. I do not know what the crime of your ancestor was, but surely it can have no connection with the plague, or the coming of that terrible scourge have anything to do with you."

"You do not know what you are saying," Angelo replied. "My ancestor's crime was that he let loose the plague upon Venice, and the only reason why it should come again would be to destroy the descendants of that guilty man."

"Angelo Zanelli!" Winnie exclaimed, "you have brooded over this matter until you are going insane. Do not think of it. Put it out of your mind. I do not believe that any one of your race could have committed such a crime. It is simply impossible, some wicked plot invented by his enemies."

"I have thought it might be so," Angelo replied somewhat more calmly; "but Giovanni Zanelli had no enemies."

"Depend upon it you will find that he had," Winnie insisted, her only thought to get him started upon another subject. "Try to think up all the family traditions; were there never any feuds or quarrels between your people and their neighbors? Ask your mother."

Angelo frowned. "No, not her," he said. "She knows nothing of all this, and must be spared. She is not a Zanelli by blood as I am. And she would know nothing of our history,

for my father never talked with her of his family."

"But you must have relations. There are always maiden aunts or old uncles who are perfect cyclopædias of genealogical information."

"Yes, I have an aunt who married into the Cecini family. She was just what you describe; but I have not seen her for years, and she lives in Rome."

"There!" said Winnie; "I knew there must be an aunt. Write her immediately; or, better, go and see her."

"Thank you, but I don't think—"

But Winnie darted away. She had caught a glimpse of Tib approaching the door, and she ran to meet her. "Come straight up to the balcony," she said, "and talk to Angelo Zanelli; he is nearly distracted."

"What is the matter?" Tib asked anxiously.

"Nothing is really the matter. He has simply been studying that very hard question in the Catechism which I never could answer when I was a child. Let me see; how did it go? 'Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?' That was the question, and the answer was: 'All mankind, descending from him in

ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in the first transgression.' When my grandmother used to catechise me Sunday evenings, I always went to pieces on that question.''

"I don't wonder; but I can't understand why Count Zanelli should bother his brains about a question in the Westminster Catechism, which no one puzzles over any longer."

"Go and tell him so, and perhaps you can lift him out of his doleful dumps. I couldn't."

"Winnie, what joke is this of yours?"

"No joke, I assure you. Go and ask the count what is troubling him and see what he will say."

But Tib found Angelo in a very different mood from that in which Winnie had left him. As soon as she had disappeared he had turned again to his newspaper, and continued to read the article descriptive of the plague.

"The native physicians are very ignorant, and are worse than helpless in this emergency. The victims are daily exposed to die on the banks of the Ganges. Only one doctor in the province appears to have any success in treating the malady, and this is a man of Greek descent, named Chrysolarus, who comes from a long line

of physicians, and is said to be in possession of a family secret by which his ancestors have from time to time successfully treated this disease at different periods of its visitation."

A wild hope sprang up in Angelo Zanelli's heart. What if this Dr. Chrysolarus were a descendant of the Greek who had fled at the time of Giovanni Zanelli's trial? What if he were no bearer of bribes, but an earnest seeker after knowledge, and if the practices which had been regarded as nefarious were gropings after some new remedies and preventions for this dread disease? The possibility made his brain reel; and Tib, who came to him expecting to find him in one of his dark moods, was surprised at the look of exultant joy with which he greeted her.

"You have come from the Signorita Winnie?" he asked. "She has told you?"

"Not a great deal; only that you were troubled about some problem."

"A problem? Ah! that is it; but the solution is perhaps near. Only I must go to India to find it."

"To India! What is the problem? Must you stay long?"

Her voice trembled. If Angelo was to be detained long in India they might return to America before he came back, and this be the end of everything.

He saw the look of dismay in her face, but dared not comfort his heart with what it might mean.

"Sit down, Signorita Nellie, and I will tell you the problem." And he told her the story of the old alchemist, and his great desire to prove him an honorable man, but not of the issues which hung on that proof.

"And you must go? Why do you not write first?"

"Yes, I shall write, but I feel that I shall go; but first I must tell my mother everything, otherwise she could not understand the necessity of this journey."

"You should have told her before. A trouble shared with one who loves us is a trouble halved."

"But I would not have her bear even half the trouble."

"Do you suppose that one can hide trouble from one's mother? She has known all along that something distressed you, and it has wor-

ried her infinitely more because you have not given her your confidence, because she did not know what this trouble was, than if she had been told the truth. I have seen her watch you with such a hungry, devouring gaze, as though she would read your very soul, and then jest bravely, as though her heart were as light as a young girl's, when you gave her one of your dark, suspicious looks, as though you felt and resented her watchfulness."

"And you have seen all that! And I have been so blind!"

"It takes a woman, I think, to perfectly read another woman's heart. Tell your mother, Angelo, and always tell her everything."

And when Angelo told her he was surprised to see how little of a shock it was. "I wish your father had told me this long ago," she said. "It would have made many mysteries clear."

"Would you have married him, mother, if you had known this family secret?"

"Certainly, my dear. I would have given him the consolation of my devotion all the more readily if I had known how sorely he needed it."

Angelo's heart leaped; but he added, after a moment's thought: "But was it right for father, knowing what he did, to hand down this curse of inherited criminal instincts?"

"My son, you are not your father's judge," the contessa replied. "Moreover, I am certain that he did not believe—nor do I believe—that your ancestor was a criminal."

"If he could only have proved that, how happy we would all have been!"

A look of infinite pity came into his mother's face. "Even that knowledge might not have removed all obstacles to our marriage. Still it is best to know the whole truth, and the only grief that is insupportable is the wickedness of those near and dear to us."

After this the days sped by rapidly until a letter was received from the Dr. Chrysolarus in India, saying that an ancestor of his had had an intimate friend named Zanelli, and that he was in the possession of a chest of papers, medical disquisitions and records of observations written by this Dr. Zanelli, which he would show to Angelo with pleasure if he would come to India, though he was unwilling to send them to Venice.

This at once decided Angelo to take the journey. His mother, after studying the documents in the alchemist's cabinet, made no objection, but, on the contrary, encouraged it, though she expressed no great hope of his finding the data he sought.

"It is always best to do all one can," she said. "Action, the change of scene, will do you good; and in the mean time I will renew communication with your relatives in Rome."

The contessa had at first desired to go with her son; but to this, on account of the presence of the plague in the country, he would not listen; and John accepted an invitation to make the trip with him as his companion.

Angelo kept his determination to make no revelation to the last; only when parting from Tib he said, "I depend upon you to cheer my mother until I return."

CHAPTER XIII.

A MODERN ALCHEMIST.

SHORTLY after Count Zanelli's departure an event occurred which was of interest to all the Americans at the Palazzo Zanelli, though more particularly so to Winnie. This was the unexpected arrival of Dr. Van Silva, familiarly known as Van to readers of former volumes of this series.

When Winnie left Holland it was Van's intention to sail shortly for America; but about this time the plague appeared in China, and attracted the attention of investigators in pathology. One of Van's old classmates at the Pasteur Laboratory in Paris, Dr. Yersin, discovered

the plague germ and labored to cultivate an anti-plague serum which would prove the same antidote for this disease as antitoxin for diphtheria. By inoculating goats and donkeys with the plague bacillus, at first in minute quantities, and repeating the inoculation from time to time, he succeeded in developing a germ which, introduced into the blood of a plague-stricken patient, destroyed the deadly bacillus. Dr. Yersin proved the efficacy of his great discovery by nursing twenty-three victims of the plague in Amoy, of whom he cured twenty-one, when in the ordinary course of the disease twenty-one at least would have died.

Van was full of admiration for this great pioneer in medical science, and of enthusiasm for the study of bacteriology itself, and instead of returning to America, he lingered in Paris, studying its latest developments. Just at this time a convention of scientists was held at Venice to discuss the disease, and Van determined at once to attend it. He had a vague hope that a way might open to his going out to the Orient either to join Dr. Yersin or as a medical missionary to some other plague-stricken district; and even if this project should fail, Van

felt that the trip to Venice would be fully rewarded by the pleasure of again meeting Winnie. He was glad that the convention would detain him for some time in the beautiful city; and though under ordinary circumstances he would have fumed with impatience at the slowness of its proceedings, and that there seemed to be no likelihood of the organization of any expedition of scientists for experimental study or of a relief corps of nurses and physicians under the auspices of the Red Cross, he quieted his conscience with the plea that the delay was enforced, and gave himself up to the delight which he always experienced in Winnie's society.

At first he had taken a room at a neighboring hotel, but he happened to mention to Winnie that he desired an apartment where he could carry on his studies and experiments, and as the contessa had shown the old alchemist's little suite quite unreservedly to them all, explaining the spring which opened the secret door in the studio, it immediately occurred to Winnie that this was the very place for Van. He agreed with her emphatically, and Adelaide was empowered to negotiate with the contessa

for the rental of the rooms. The contessa kindly responded by insisting that Van should occupy them as her guest, and Van was immediately installed. The place was marvellously fitted for all his needs, for in the walled garden, with which the suite alone communicated, there were old rabbit hutches and sheds for animals. As Van laughingly remarked, if the old alchemist had himself been a bacteriologist, he could not have provided him more perfectly with conveniences where experiments could be carried on apart from the espionage of prying curiosity.

Van was greatly interested in the history of this Dr. Zanelli as Winnie and Tib recounted it. He deeply regretted that his library had been burned, as he would have enjoyed browsing in the old books and ascertaining just the status of the science of medicine in the sixteenth century. The alchemist's cabinet was put at his disposal, and Tib showed him the record of Dr. Zanelli's trials and the diary, written in a hand as perfect as print and with perfectly black ink on yellowed parchment in scholarly Latin.

Van translated the record of the trials first,

and then took up the diary, reading scraps of it each morning to the girls as they took their coffee together on the balcony before they separated for the work of the day.

The girls had taken up a new occupation, which for several days in the week interrupted their artistic study.

The contessa had said to Tib: "In the old days, when the Crusaders sailed away to the Orient, their wives and sweethearts, mothers and sisters, filled the dreary days of absence with works of charity and religion. As Angelo fears that his ancestor may have been responsible for bringing the plague to Venice, or at least for its spread by his foolhardy experiments, I intend to do what I can to combat its coming at this time. If your friend Dr. Van Silva will write a lecture, giving the best means for its prevention by simple sanitary rules, that should be known and can be obeyed by every one, I will translate the lecture into Italian and invite my friends to hear it."

Van was very happy to do this; and by the contessa's efforts a club was founded among influential people, having for its object the improvement of the sanitation of Venice. The

contessa did more than this; she invited the school-teachers to her house, and explained to them how they could instruct their pupils in some of the first principles of healthful living, and especially in the importance of personal cleanliness. With the fresh salt water constantly lapping their doorsteps, there was no excuse for the poorest for dirty linen or filthy persons. It was just here that Winnie and Tib organized a scheme which put into practice the theories taught by the school-teachers. Violante's sister was an expert laundress. The picturesque court with the carved well-curb, where the girls painted, was frequently sloppy with little runnels of water, whose cerulean hue came from the indigo on her bench, and on other days the sunny side of the wooden balcony was white with linen drying, and the two scaldinos that heated her irons were each red hot. But Placida could not get sufficient custom to keep her busy, and Winnie and Tib subsidized her for two days in each week to open a free school in fine laundry work for girls. Not only were the girls taught free of charge, but they were encouraged to bring the family washing to practise upon. Placida soon had so many pupils

that she could not attend to them, so Tib and Winnie, who could not afford to increase their money contribution, assisted in teaching the children on ironing day. The contessa was delighted, and offered prizes for the most expert—cakes of scented soap, combs, and tooth-brushes—while excursions to the Lido, with surf bathing, were provided once a week for the entire class; this as a matter of pure enjoyment, with no hint to the children that it, too, was a sanitary measure and a part of the crusade against filth and disease. They soon begged to take their brothers and sisters with them to share in this pleasure, and many of them became fine swimmers and divers. Teaching the little laundresses was work to which neither of the girls had been accustomed, and on certain days, when the heat was more than usually sultry, it was very trying; but the excursions to the Lido were always delightful. Van went with them, and was a great help as marshal. Winnie was a prize swimmer, and more than once her quick perception and prompt, cool action saved the life of one of her charges. It was owing to her that the season ended without an accident, for Tib's heroism was of an-

other sort, and she admired Winnie's dash without being able to emulate it, never realizing that the self-abnegation which enabled her to care for the children on their way to the Lido was as truly heroism as Winnie's more brilliant exploits. Though always gentle and kind, she was firm upon one point. She would never allow a dirty child to caress her. "After you have had your bath and are sweet and clean," she would promise, "I will kiss you with pleasure." And many a child, in order to win this sweet guerdon, the sooner scrubbed her face energetically before going to the Lido. The results of that summer's instruction in cleanliness were incalculable. Each child carried to its home new ideals of purity, and became herself a missionary of that virtue which is not only "next to," but an essential part of godliness. She had a way, too, of impressing them with moral lessons by condemning a boy who had used foul language to have his mouth washed with strong black soap by two of the older girls, and she taught them such texts as "Blessed are the pure in heart."

It was Placida, however, who taught them to

sing the laundress's song, which has been translated by George Borrow :

> " I'll weary myself each night and each day
> To aid my unfortunate brothers,
> As the laundress tans her own face in the ray
> To cleanse the garments of others."

" You must find this a great interruption to your regular work," the contessa said one day.

" On the contrary," Winnie replied, pointing to the little silver cross which she always wore, " it is a part of the work which we are pledged to do. Tib and I have felt so selfish all winter that we could not thoroughly enjoy our art work. We have been homesick, too, for the Messiah Home, but now we feel that we have found some work that we can do for our Elder Brother even here, and so we can really enjoy the other privileges that come to us."

" What do you mean by the Messiah Home ?" the contessa asked, and Winnie told her of the " children's charity for children." The home, which is such more than in name, where homeless children are cared for,* in great part

* The Messiah Home, 145 East Fifteenth Street, New York, has been described in previous volumes of this series. Its beautiful work still goes on, aided largely by children.

through the efforts of the King's Daughters, the Junior League, and other bands of children.

"Are there any Italian children there?" the contessa asked.

"The home has cared for a great many Italians first and last," Winnie replied. "I remember the three Amati girls and the Stavini boy at its very first founding. And is it not odd, dear contessa, our first fair was in imitation of a Venetian fête. That was because Tib was always fond of anything that had anything to do with Venice."

The contessa looked lovingly at Tib. "And why was that, my dear, since at that time you had not seen Venice?"

Tib was too honest not to answer truly. "My love for Venice dates from my childhood. It was Count Angelo who told me about the city first."

"Then my son must help you with that Home of the Elder Brother of which you speak. That idea of endowing a 'guest bed' is a charming one, and Lolo shall own one there, where Italian children far from home shall be entertained. Tell me how to make out the check, and paint for me, to hang over the cot,

some scene in Venice. I would not have Italian children forget their native land even in my own hospitable country."

So the summer passed. It seemed a long time to Tib before the contessa received the first letter announcing her son's arrival in Bombay. His description of the plague and of the famine was heartrending. John Nash, too, who at another time would have had eyes only for the wonderful Indian architecture, and the picturesque aspects of Oriental life, wrote only now of the horror of the Black Death.

They had to journey some distance into the interior to reach the town where Dr. Chrysolarus lived. The count wrote that his quest in the presence of so much misery seemed a very selfish one; but that he should endeavor to relieve as much suffering as possible on his way. He regretted that he had not studied medicine; money could do so little without knowledge.

When Winnie heard this she could hardly contain herself. "Here is Van," she thought, "who has the knowledge. If the count only knew, perhaps he would furnish the means for Van to join him. What a pity that he did not

reach Venice before the count started, and go with him instead of John Nash."

But delicacy prevented both Tib and Winnie from suggesting this to the contessa or from writing to the count, and Van waited in vain for any action on the part of the convention. But his stay was not a futile one. Besides aiding the contessa in her plan for the good of Venice, he was learning much, and more by his individual studies and experiments than from the discussions at the convention. He was greatly interested, as we have said, in the diary of the old alchemist. "He seems to have been a very worthy man," he said to the contessa, who had requested him to read the diary and give her his opinion of its author. "He was evidently an enthusiast in his profession, and particularly interested in studying the plague. I find here a note in which he copies the diagnosis given by Greek physicians in the time of Dionysius, 300 B.C., and he draws the conclusion that it was the same disease which Boccaccio describes as ravaging Florence in 1348, when one hundred thousand souls perished. He makes the remark that Venice founded the first quarantine in 1403, and hopes that these meas-

ures will be perfected. It is strange that he was considered a magician, for he does not take any stock in sorcery or astrology, which he calls 'old wives' fables.' He writes here of Pietro of Albano, a doctor and professor at the University of Padua, and quotes his own statement that philosophy made him subtle, medicine rich, and astrology a liar. He praises the Doge Orlo Maliperi, who in 1181 punished poisoning and sorcery with death. He appears to me to have been an earnest seeker after truth and an experimentalist with new methods rather than a follower of old ones, though he asserts that the Arabian physicians of Cordova and Toledo were in possession of many secrets unknown to the Italian men of science. He was a close observer and very humane. He writes frequently of the diseases of animals, and had made original study in veterinary science. I do not believe that such a man could have had any malign motives."

"Nor do I," the contessa replied quickly. "The Zanellis were all peculiarly sensitive and tender-hearted. My husband could never bear to see any creature suffer. He told me that his father would never hunt, or fish, or eat flesh of

any kind, maintaining that as it was not in our power to bestow life, we had no right to take it away. I have never for a moment thought that this ancestor was a wholesale murderer through malice prepense. If he really committed the crime with which he was charged, he was not an intentional criminal. What I fear is that, in his wild experiments, he may have been in some sort answerable to the charge. My son's lawyer, who has been looking this matter up very carefully, says that the Inquisition never had full power in Venice to commit the atrocious murders which signalized it in other parts of Italy and in Spain, and though at the time our ancestor was executed Leo X. was using his utmost power to push on its work, and had published his bull 'Honestis,' upbraiding the laxity and leniency which had been displayed during previous pontificates, his most energetic expressions could not induce the Signoria to give up its right of final decision in all matters of life and death. The Inquisition might ferret out heresy, sorcery, or other crimes; might prosecute and even condemn, but sentence could only be pronounced and executed by the Council of Ten. So, while the persecution of

the Waldenses raged around us in other parts of Venetia, and seventy witches were burned in one year in Brescia, the Inquisitor Fra Antonio called in vain upon our Senate for aid in supporting his measures, and Venice remained a haven of refuge for the persecuted. Consequently, though the crime for which our ancestor finally suffered was said to have been committed during the plague of 1511, he was twice brought to trial, and was not finally executed until fully ten years later. It would seem that he had every chance for justice, for at his first trial he was acquitted by the Holy Office itself, through the influence of Cardinal Bembo, and the matter was never carried to the Signoria. But when the charges were renewed and approved to the satisfaction of the Inquisition, the proceedings were carefully revised and ratified by the Council of Ten, so that he perished not alone as a victim of the Inquisition, but as an ordinary criminal condemned by the State for a secular offence."

"And yet you say, contessa, that you agree with me in believing him innocent."

"Innocent, but none the less the cause of great calamity to his native city, and the trans-

mitter to his descendants of an ineradicable curse. I have sent my son on this quest with no hope of any success, but to distract his mind and for another reason. I fear that he is quite right in his conclusion that no Zanelli since the alchemist had or has any right to marry."

"I understand you," said Van with profound respect and pity. "You believe that Giovanni Zanelli was insane, and that this insanity was hereditary?"

The contessa bowed silently.

"Why do you think so? Were there any other members of the family who were indisputably deranged?"

"I am not so conversant with the family history as I could wish. My husband was peculiarly reticent on this point; but from what I have gathered, the Zanellis were all more or less peculiar. My husband's father, as I have said, was what we would call to-day a crank in his vegetarian and other humanitarian theories. In my husband's own case the tendency showed itself only mildly in a melancholy and secretive disposition, a characteristic which I have noticed with grave solicitude developing in my son."

Van looked very grave. The case was taking on new bearings. "I cannot help thinking you are wrong," he said. "This diary, as I have studied it so far, is not the record of the workings of a diseased mind. From this point on it contains the careful noting of his experiments. These I will follow, and I hope soon to be able to prove to you that Dr. Zanelli was neither a criminal nor a maniac, but a man who lived three centuries too soon and a martyr to science."

"In the mean time I hope to hear from my husband's aunt, to whom I have written for enlightenment, and I beg you, Dr. Van Silva, to conduct your researches as impartially as though your friendship for us did not bias your wishes. Remember that a physician must often be cruel to be kind; and should you find reason to believe that my apprehensions are well founded, I beg you to induce these young American girls to leave for America before my son's return. I am sure you will understand me when I say that it is because I sincerely love the Signorita Nellie that I make this request."

CHAPTER XIV.

CÆSAR BORGIA'S REVENGE.

"There be quick poisons and slow poisons—poisons that strike with instant death so soon as they be swallowed; and poisons whereby the victims endure a thousand deaths, dying by inches, as by some mysterious disease. And these poisons be the most malignant, not only because they who have taken them suffer longer, but because in their lingering they transmit the evil of their effects in diseased constitutions to their posterity, so that one may strike not one's enemy alone but his remotest descendant, and that with a refinement of cruelty as exquisite as its workings are sure and subtle."—*Old Book on Toxicology.*

COUNT ANGELO had been gone some weeks before Tib happened to think of the letters in Violante's possession and the possibility that they might throw some light on the story of the old alchemist. This possibility flashed across her mind one day when reading a history of the Italian Renaissance by Symonds. He gives better than any other author the historical background of the time in which Dr. Zanelli lived; and as Tib read of Titian, of Leo X.,

and the Borgias, it struck her that Cæsar Borgia's name had been mentioned in one of the letters, and she determined to see Violante at once and ask her permission to translate them. That we may understand these letters as Tib did, it will be well to give here a brief *résumé* of the lives of some of the personages of whom she had been reading, referring the reader also to the dates given in the preface for a complete comprehension of the succession of events.

It was the time of the Renaissance, that wonderful period when all over Italy learning, literature, the arts, inventions, discoveries, new schemes of government had their new birth; and it was an era of great wealth and luxury, when nothing seemed impossible to accomplish to men of genius and of daring, and these were everywhere in every rank and profession.

The time makes the man. This is nowhere more evident than in a consideration of the Popes. Those from 1447 to 1527, under the influence of the Renaissance, were luxurious, selfish, unscrupulous; the Popes and prominent churchmen who followed them in the remainder of the sixteenth century, stimulated by the great

reform outside the Church, while uncompromising opponents of Protestantism, were themselves active reformers, often men of saintly lives, self-denying and stern. This reform within the Church is a fact of which Protestants are apt to lose sight. Savonarola was a product of this period, a protest of all that was sincere in the Church against its corruptions, and no saintlier soul ever lived than Carlo Borromeo.

Do you remember his story? Brought up in that princely ancestral home on Isola Bella, in Lago Maggiore, his soul filled full with the beautiful, he devoted all his wealth, his superb scholarship, his life to God. At first he felt that the mission of his life was to build the most beautiful cathedral in Italy, and as Archbishop of Milan his fortune, his influence, and his critical taste were devoted to this ambition. Urged by his passion, the cathedral shot up like a lily—not built piecemeal through different ages, but with all the coherence of one guiding mind. It was the dream of his life to chant the "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace" at its dedication. Then the black plague swept down upon Italy, and the dead and dying lay in the streets of Milan. Carlo

Borromeo took the funds which he had set aside for the building of his beloved cathedral and opened hospitals, organized the monks into a sanitary commission and into bands of nurses, and himself drove about the fever-stricken streets collecting the sick. Under his energetic measures the plague was stayed, but as its last victim, Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, lay dead. In a jewelled casket in the crypt of the finished cathedral, whose many-statued pinnacles his longing eyes never saw, they buried the man who loved his fellow-men more than the dear ambition of his life, or than life itself, and who shall deny his right to canonization?

Even the men whom we brand as supporters of the Inquisition were many of them sincere in their rigor, seeking to cleanse the Church of its sins. But this period of reform was the swing of the pendulum from one of license. Rodrigo Borgia, who in 1492 became Pope as Alexander VI., is a type of the worst of the Popes of the Renaissance. The Borgias, father and son, are an interesting study. So expert were they in poisoning that they could

> "Carry pure death in an earring, a casket,
> A signet, a fan mount, a filigree basket."

At Alexander's election, we are told by Symonds how shamelessly the cardinals' votes were bought. The Cardinal Ascanio Sforza sold his vote for the lucrative post of vice-chancellor; the Orsini for the Borgia palaces at Rome, together with two castles; Cardinal Colonna for the abbey of Subiaco; others were bought with churches and bishoprics. Less influential members sold themselves for gold, and to meet their demands the Borgias sent Cardinal Sforza four mules laden with coin in open day. The fiery Cardinal Giuliano de Rovere (who later in life himself became Pope under the title of Julius II.) remained implacable and obdurate. He defied the whole brood of Borgias, and from this time always wore secret armor. He and five other cardinals alone refused to sell their votes, but the majority of the electoral college were corrupted, and Alexander Borgia was elected, the young Cardinal Giovanni de Medici (afterward Leo X.) whispering, on the announcement, "We are in the wolf's jaws; he will gulp us down unless we make our flight good." A writer of the day says he combined craft with singular sagacity, a sound judgment with extraordinary powers

of persuasion. Symonds asserts, "All considerations of religion and morality were subordinated by him to policy." He not only sold benefices, but murdered the holders and sold them over and over again.

The Venetian ambassador wrote in 1500: "Every night they find in Rome four or five murdered men, bishops and prelates and so forth." Three cardinals were known to have been poisoned by the Pope. Cæsar Borgia, his son, was still more reckless, and caused all who opposed him to be assassinated either by the stiletto or by poison.

To show the general spread of wickedness which followed those illustrious examples, I quote from another authority:

"Italian history teems with instances which sufficiently show that poison was both the favorite weapon of the oppressor and the revenge of the oppressed. The Borgias are generally singled out and held up to the horror and detestation of mankind; but they merely employed this method of destroying their adversaries a little more frequently than their neighbors. In 1648 it was found that young widows were extraordinarily abundant in

Rome, and that most of the unhappy marriages were speedily dissolved by the sickness and death of the husband; and further inquiries resulted in the discovery of a secret society of young matrons which met at the house of an old hag, by name Hieronyma Spara, a reputed witch, who supplied those of them who wished with a slow poison, clear, tasteless, and limpid, and of strength sufficient to destroy life in the course of a day, week, month, or number of months, as the purchaser preferred. Half a century later the discovery was made of a similar organization at Naples, headed by an old woman of threescore and ten, named Toffania, who manufactured a poison similar to that of La Spara, but known as Aqua Tofana. After having caused the death of more than six hundred persons, Toffania was seized, tried, and strangled."

Lucrezia Borgia was for a long time considered equally criminal, but is now believed to have been innocent of the crimes imputed to her. For eleven years the Pope Alexander and his son rioted in wickedness, and then both accidentally drank poisoned wine prepared for the Cardinal of Corneto. The Pope died, and

though Cæsar Borgia recovered, his enemies concerted means for his downfall.

Pope Julius II., though utterly worldly, was a stronger temporal prince than any of his predecessors, and he left the papacy enriched and strengthened. Leo X., who succeeded Julius in 1513, was the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was thoroughly a Medici and a product of the Renaissance. When he was made Pope he said to the Duke of Nemours, "Let us enjoy the papacy, since God has given it to us." This was the keynote of his pontificate; masks and balls, comedies and carnival processions filled the streets of Rome. He is praised as a princely patron of art, but he was ruinously extravagant. Julius had left seven hundred thousand ducats in the coffers of St. Angelo, and the creation of thirty-nine cardinals in 1517 brought it above five hundred thousand more, yet the bankers and cardinals of Rome were half ruined by loans which Leo X. extorted from them; and when he died the very jewels of his tiara were pledged to pay his debts. He lived joyously, but he was a scholar and the friend of scholars. A wily statesman, he was able to make both Francis I. and

Charles V. his tools, and to work the ruin both of the dauntless Savonarola and of the republic which the reforming monk had established in Florence, and to re-establish his exiled family in their power. A time-server, he saw that the feeling of the people was setting toward a sterner doctrine, and so, while utterly irreligious himself, he gave his sanction to the Inquisition.

Bearing in mind that the old alchemist is supposed to have lived through the pontificates of Alexander Borgia and Julius II., and to have been executed in that of Leo X., and that the visitation of the plague during which he made his experiments was that of 1511, when Giorgione died, we will take up the letters which Tib found waiting for her translation.

Orazio's First Letter.

To the Illustrious Signorita Violante Palma.

Honored Lady: I write touching a matter concerning which you asked me, when you were doing my father the honor to pose for him in his studio (but which I could not expound in detail at that time, owing to the presence of persons upon whose discretion I could not

count)—namely, the unjust trials and murderous death (albeit the former were carried on by the Holy Office and the latter executed by our State of Venice) of our mutual friend and my revered instructor, Dr. Zanelli.

You will remember that at the peril of my life I testified in his favor, clearing him, at his first trial, of one of the charges preferred against him—namely, that of concocting the infamous Borgia poison. For at the time of the visit of that wicked prince Cæsar Borgia to Venice, when he sat to my father for his portrait, though I was then but a stripling, I had already begun my novitiate as a student of alchemy with Dr. Zanelli, and we were then studying the nature of poisons and their antidotes. It was open scandal that the Borgias were expert poisoners, having in their possession a most deadly drug, of whose nature nothing was clearly known except that no chemist had been able to invent a test for its presence or an antidote which could counteract its effects. My good and wise master was much interested in this matter, and I have heard him declare that if he could submit this subtle poison to certain tests in his lab-

oratory he could accomplish both of these much-to-be-desired objects.

Therefore, when Cæsar Borgia visited Venice, and came each day to my father's studio, I was possessed with a fascination which kept me in his presence. This fascination had nothing of love in it, for I felt from the first time I beheld him that here was an evil and a dangerous man; but I brooded over my master's desire to possess himself of the Borgia poison, and I longed for some opportunity to rifle his pockets, when perchance he should be bathing at the Lido or overcome with wine after a banquet, for I doubted not that, serpent as he was, he carried his venom always with him, and that if I watched I should espy it. And this, indeed, happened, but not in such guise as I had figured to myself.

My father had one of the marvellous talking birds, a descendant of those which Marco Polo brought from the Indies. He kept it in his studio, not because he delighted in its song or speech, for in the former accomplishment it possessed no skill whatever, and in the latter it had been bred up by malicious people who had taught it to blaspheme and to call evil names;

but it was a bird of such gorgeous and wonderful plumage—red, yellow, blue, and green—that my father took pleasure in its color, and had chained it to a perch, from whence it would swear and vituperate to its heart's content. This scandal-causing fowl had no respect for dignitaries, for I have heard it blaspheme in the presence of Cardinal Bembo, and call the doge a prating fool. When Cæsar Borgia first entered the studio it flew into a fury, ruffling its feathers and shrieking out its entire vocabulary of objurgation, in which were the words murderer, assassin, and parricide. The prince turned white at that last word (though his father was then living) and drew his sword; but my father restrained him, explaining that the witless creature had no knowledge of the sense of the words it uttered. But though the prince laughed, I could see that he thought the jest a sorry one, and that he hated the parrot and would willingly have done it a mischief. Therefore, I could scarce believe my eyes the next morning when, entering the studio before my father, I saw the prince feeding the bird with comfits. But I understood better the meaning of this largess when, an hour later, the unhappy

parrot dropped dead from its perch. My father was distressed, but the prince smiled sardonically and said that doubtless the creature had died of too much talking, and that he had known many men to die from the same cause.

After Cæsar Borgia had left the studio I carefully examined the parrot's feeding-trough, and found therein several small round comfits, like beads, which the prince had doubtless placed there. These I gathered up with care and took to Dr. Zanelli, telling him the entire story. I have never seen my master so happy or so excited; he embraced me, bade me keep the secret well, and told me that I had furnished him with the means of baffling many evil designs, which baffling he indeed accomplished, and in this way:

Dr. Zanelli had a friend in the director of the glass-works at Murano, and for him shortly after this he invented a species of glass containing a chemical so sensitive that the acrid poison would disintegrate it, and the glass so wrought upon would fly into fragments; and the doctor went often to Murano to drop into the molten glass the chemicals which should give it this wonderful quality. About the same time he

perfected the invention of an antidote, and this and the glasses were sold in Rome, but were not publicly offered for sale in Venice, as there was no market for them, there being no one here who had cause to fear the malice of the Borgias—no one but my dear master himself; for it soon happened that Cæsar Borgia, having prepared a posset for Giuliano de Rovere, whom he knew to be his father's enemy and the candidate for the papacy of the party which opposed the Borgias, had the mortification to see De Rovere drop into the posset a small glass bead, and when it presently melted, as though it had been sugar, he spilled the wine upon the floor, declaring that it was poisoned, and he would have none of it. Whereupon the prince knew that he was foiled; and causing his spies to search, he speedily ascertained that Dr. Zanelli of Venice was possessed of the secret of thwarting their malice; whereupon they vented it upon his head, but not by the means of poison, knowing that he possessed both test and antidote. But the prince's father, Pope Alexander Borgia, himself wrote to the Inquisitor at Venice, telling him to look to Dr. Zanelli as one *who knew too much concerning*

poisons. That the bloodhounds were put upon the track of my good master in this manner was not known at the first trial, but afterward was explained by Cardinal Bembo, who had the story from De Rovere, after he became Pope Julius, and who so answered the charge when Dr. Zanelli was brought a second time before the court.

But, as I have said, at this first trial, when, strange to say, the only charge preferred was that he had concocted poison, I brought him safely off, testifying what I have related to you, and that my dear master's endeavor had always been to frustrate the evil designs of that wicked man, Cæsar Borgia. I showed one of the comfits—which by good fortune I had preserved—and I testified how I had seen Cæsar Borgia give it with others to our parrot, and how the creature had immediately died; I fetched the director from Murano also, who brought one of the test goblets and some test beads which Dr. Zanelli had made, and their efficacy was proved in court; for we dissolved the comfit in soup, and causing a dog to lap it, it died as the parrot had done; and then putting one of the glass beads in the liquor it melted, and

pouring more into the glass it shivered, though water, wine, and other liquids had made no impression upon it.

Thus we proved triumphantly that Dr. Zanelli had invented a test of the Borgia poison, and the inference was (the charge of poisoning being preferred by the Pope), that it was the revenge of himself and his son. But though Dr. Zanelli was acquitted at this time, there remained, alas! a vague and unreasonable idea in the minds of the judges that his knowledge of the composition of the poison, as proved by his power to detect and counteract it, might have been due to his having been its original framer, and that the Pope's knowledge of Dr. Zanelli had been gained in this way, and his charge, though reflecting no credit upon himself, was still a true one.

But Cæsar Borgia, perceiving that he had gained shame instead of the revenge he sought, was not content to rest the matter there, but—as I confidently believe, though am not able to certify—caused my master to be spied upon by his minions; and having ascertained in what manner he could be most easily attacked, invented a new and more diabolical charge, and

lodged the same with the Holy Office, accusing my dear master this time of having introduced the plague into Venice, being bribed thereto by the Sultan of Turkey.

What gave color to this suspicion was the fact that my master, during the last visitation of the plague, had treated his patients in a new and daring manner, being attended only by his disciple, a wealthy Greek named Chrysolarus, who had come from Constantinople to study with him. This foreigner very foolishly made a great show of his riches, indulging in all sorts of extravagances. Out of gratitude to our master, he presented him with a cimeter made in Damascus, which was produced in evidence against Dr. Zanelli at his trial as a gift from the Sultan. Nor was this dastardly man there to explain, for on the arrest of our master he fled for his life, when, had he remained, he might have cleared our dear friend by showing that the transfusion of blood which he had practised had effected the cure of all his patients. And he alone could have done this, for he was the most advanced of all of Dr. Zanelli's disciples, and the only one to whom this marvellous secret had been

confided. The craven had indeed good reason to fear that his testimony would not be received, and that he also would fall under the ban of the Church; but this in no wise excused him. Howbeit, by a merciful dispensation of Providence, Pope Alexander died just at this time, and his son fell into disgrace, so that there was a change in all matters connected with the Church; for now Giuliano de Rovere was Pope, and there was a new Inquisitor, who reported the causes waiting for decision to his Holiness; and Pope Julius sent Cardinal Bembo to Venice, who told the cause of Cæsar Borgia's hatred of Dr. Zanelli, and the Pope ordered a stay in the proceeding; so that during his pontificate the matter was not brought up, and Dr. Zanelli and his friends took comfort, thinking it was ended. But later Pope Julius dying and Leo X. succeeding to the papacy, he sought to curry favor with those of a sterner sort by fanning the flames of the Inquisition, and the old charges were brought forward again, and many people were burned in towns round about us. Then we saw how unfortunate it was that Dr. Zanelli had not been brought to trial in the pontificate of Julius, who was his friend (for he owed his

life to the doctor's invention), so ending the matter, instead of laying it upon the table to be brought up when he could no longer protect him. Cardinal Bembo did his best for him, as, indeed, always (for he testified in the matter of the book of Pomponazio—which asserted that the immortality of the soul could not be proved, which book the patriarch of Venice burned publicly as heretical—that he had read the book with pleasure and found it perfectly conformable). Cardinal Bembo, I say, took his part, as he ever did that of the accused; but he could not prove the finger of Cæsar Borgia in this second plot, he being so long dead, and the poison of his which he had prepared being of such slow effect that it seemed incredible that he was the author of it. Moreover, the affair was judged not by the Church alone, but by the Council of Ten as well; and here lay the chief danger to the doctor; for while in matters of heresy the Signoria did not concern itself, and would willingly have left all to the opinion of Cardinal Bembo, and have protected one of its citizens against the severity of the Church, when, on the contrary, the safety of

many citizens was concerned, and their death aimed at by a foreign enemy, here was matter of State importance, to be judged and punished by the State. And so our dear master was judged and suffered, being strangled by the civil arm and his body burned by the Inquisition. But one man could have saved our master, and that was Chrysolarus, and proclamation was made for him by the State; but he came not.

This, then, is a record of the secret causes which wrought his condemnation. I cannot but regard it as a blessing that his wife, dear lady, had died before these cruel events. He left but one son, a lad who had not the horror of seeing his father's body burned; for after taking leave of Dr. Zanelli in prison, after his condemnation, this son was hurried out of the city by friends of the family, but by whom I know not; and they fearing the continued rage of his enemies, have so successfully concealed his hiding-place that we have never been able to find any trace of him. All this I have written out for you, sweet lady, knowing your gratitude for our dear master, who cured you

during the plague, and would have healed your beloved Giorgione had he been permitted; and so I rest,

Your faithful servitor,

ORAZIO VECELLI.

CHAPTER XV.

SHREDS AND PATCHES.

AFTER all, though Orazio's letter had given a clearer picture of the progress of the trial or trials than the record which the Inquisitor had published, it had proved nothing new excepting the existence of a powerful enemy.

Van, who had finished his translation of the diary, was also obliged to confess that his study had developed nothing in regard to Dr. Zanelli's treatment of his plague-smitten patients, though it threw some interesting side-lights on Venetian society of that period. He spoke of the charming reunions at Titian's house, and of the many illustrious people whom he met

there—most lovingly of Sansovino, and admiringly of his sculpture, especially the door of the sacristy of St. Mark's, in which he introduced the portrait of Titian and other friends. He praised most his library and the mint, which Sansovino's son described as "a notable edifice, all interwoven within and without of cut stone, bricks, and iron, without so much as a foot of wood, so that for strength and for being fireproof there is none other which can compare with it." The only man of whom he spoke with dislike was Pietro Aretino, a comic poet of the day, who satirized every one with a scurrilous wit, which was often past endurance. He related that Tintoretto, finding his sarcasms not at all to his taste, invited the satirist to come to his studio, and when he had him safely within the apartment began to play in a menacing manner with a long pistol or arquebus.

"What are you doing?" Aretino asked in alarm.

"I am measuring you," Tintoretto replied, "and I want you to remember that your height is exactly three lengths of my pistol."

Aretino took the hint and never afterward

caricatured Tintoretto. Aretino's epitaph was written in Latin during his lifetime by an acquaintance, and has been well translated by Mr. F. B. Sanborn:

"Old Time, that all things will devour,
Beneath this stone has hid the head
Of Aretine, whose verses sour
Spared not the living or the dead.
His ink has blackened the good name
Of princes, whose enduring fame
Survived the coffin and the pall.
And if he never did blaspheme
Our Lord Himself, the cause, I ween,
Was this: he knew Him not at all."

Tib assisted Van in his translations. She grew very much interested in the old alchemist, though she had no idea how closely his fate was interwoven with her own. She had, as we know, a facility for rhyming, and after poring for an afternoon over the old record, she threw her impressions into the following verses:

AN AFTERNOON WITH TITIAN.

They are gone, those days Elysian,
In the studio of Titian,
In the garden by the water,
Where the painter's peerless daughter
Listened to her lover's suit.

Kindly smiled old Sansovino.
Scoffed the witty Aretino,
Bitter wit like grapes from lava,
While Lavinia's lifted salver
Passed the luscious, ripened fruit.

Many a noble, grand Venetian
Graced the garden fêtes of Titian.
While she posed, his Violante,
Bembo sang the songs of Dante,
And Orazio touched the lute.

Who could choose but to adore her?
When he painted her as Flora
Aretino ceased his story,
Struck with beauty's charm and glory,
And the singers all were mute.

Tib explained that she was not sure that Cardinal Bembo really sang; but he doubtless recited the sonnets of Dante and Petrarch, for he edited editions of their works, which were published in Venice by the celebrated printer Aldus, as well as his own canzonets and disquisitions on love, over-gay and light for a cardinal and the keeper of St. Mark's Library, and more befitting the time when, as secretary to Caterina Cornaro, he led the amusements of her merry, mimic court at Asola, near Venice, or

dedicated his poem on "Platonic Love" to his patroness, Lucrezia Borgia.

"As I read his character," said Winnie, "Bembo was a man of an easy conscience, such as Browning describes:

> "'Sworn fast to tonsured pate, plain heaven's celibate,
> And yet earth's clear accepted servitor,
> And fit companion for the like of you,
> Yon gay Abati with the well-turned leg,
> And rose i' the hat-rim, canon's cross at neck,
> And silk mask in the pocket of the gown.'

But he was not a murderer and poisoner like the Borgias; he was simply too luxurious, like the Medici."

"The Medicis were not so very far behind the Borgias in the gentle art of poisoning," Tib replied. "Do you remember the old Capello Palace that we passed the other day on the St. Apollinares Canal? I have just looked up the history of the romantic daughter of the house, Bianca da Capello. She eloped in 1548 with a Florentine banker, Pietro Bonaventuri, and for that rash act was placed under the ban of the republic. But Bonaventuri died, and the young widow married Duke Cosimo, De Medici's son, and became Grand Duchess of

Tuscany, whereupon the Signoria removed the ban and declared her its own specially beloved daughter. She could not have the bucentaur take her to church, as she might have had under similar circumstances in Venice, but she would have a spectacular wedding procession. So she had a gilded chariot constructed, which must have looked like a Barnum band wagon, and further heightened the 'greatest-show-on-earth' effect by writing to the Pope, who was a cousin of her husband's, to send her some lions to draw them."

"What a festive young lady!" said Winnie. "Did she do anything else particularly interesting?"

"I was not impressed by anything in her after-history excepting her death. It was a pity that she did not carry one of Dr. Zanelli's poison-test goblets with her when she left Venice, for both she and her husband died, poisoned, it is thought, by Cardinal Francesco de Medici."

"I wonder," said Van, "whether your fair Venetian is the Medicean archduchess of whom Story speaks as having been poisoned in his description of the examination of the coffins in

the Medici Chapel? No, it was still another; but listen to his account. The same thing might have been said as truly of Bianca. He describes first the magnificence of the chapel. Its cost was about five million dollars. Michael Angelo's colossal statues were intended only as adjuncts.

"'All that wealth and taste could do has been done to celebrate and perpetuate the memory of those royal dukes that reigned over Florence in its prosperous days. But what of the princely personages themselves! Their bodies had been placed in the subterranean vaults of this chapel. In 1818 there had been a rumor that these Medicean coffins had been violated and robbed. An examination was made. Dark, parchment-like faces were seen with their golden locks as rich as ever and twisted with gems and pearls and costly nets. The cardinal-princes still wore their mitres and red cloaks, their glittering rings, their crosses of white enamel, their jacinths and amethysts and sapphires—all had survived their priestly selves. Giovanni delle Bande Nere was here, his battles all over, his bones scattered and loose within his iron armor, and his rusted hel-

met with his visor down. The two bodies which were found in best preservation were those of the Grand Duchess Giovanna of Austria and her daughter Anna. Corruption had scarcely touched them; and there they lay as if they had just died—the mother in red satin trimmed with lace, her red silk stockings and high-heeled shoes, the earrings hanging from her ears, and her blonde hair fresh as ever. And so, after centuries had passed, the truth became evident of the rumor that ran through Florence at the time of their death that they had died of poison. The arsenic which had taken their lives had preserved their bodies in death.' "

Dr. Zanelli's diary was not entirely devoted to observations on men and society. Van read them several pages which stated his aims as a physician and his views on what he considered the legitimate practice of his profession and the scope of medical science. This part of the diary seemed to Van a curious mixture of the superstition of the time and the daring of the original investigator, who, in his gropings, almost anticipated some of the discoveries of modern science.

"I have studied," wrote Dr. Zanelli, "magic,

alchemy, chirurgery, and astrology. The last has the elements of a great science wrapped up in it, but it is more adapted for the mathematician than the physician. It may develop new discoveries in the geography of the heavenly bodies, so that we may in time receive messages from their inhabitants or even journey to distant worlds. But I am convinced that astrology has nothing to do with the curing of disease or even, as is now firmly believed, any utility in foretelling the death of man; therefore I have abandoned the study. Magic I hold to have a place in the education and practice of the physician, for magic has to do with mind, and the operations of the mind do most sensibly affect bodily health. While a student at the university at Padua, it was my good fortune to attend a course of lectures by the learned Professor Theophrastus Bombast, who takes a new view of magic, and is himself a magician of great power. By him I was initiated into this great secret of the science. 'The exercise of magic does not require any ceremonies or conjurations, or the making of circles or signs; it requires neither benedictions nor maledictions in words; it requires only a strong faith. By faith, imagination,

and will we may accomplish whatever we may desire. By the power of faith the apostles accomplished great things, and saints performed their miracles by the power of faith. A dead saint cannot cure anybody.' Thus much said my teacher; and yet have I known the sick really cured by the means of relics. The kissing of a bone of a saint—nay, even a bone that purported merely to be that of a saint, while the wicked custodian told me that it was in reality that of a dog. Here the cure was due to the faith or the imagination of the subject, and not to the efficacy of the relic, and was, therefore, not a divine miracle, but a phenomena of magic. Therefore do I hold that magic is a legitimate study for the physician; and this science have I reserved to myself for future investigation. Its greatest adepts are the Hindoo Buddhists; and it is my intention some day to travel to the far Orient, and there devote myself to the study of occultism and the cure of bodily diseases by the operations of the mind. Meantime, and until I can give myself the privilege of studying the Hindoo sages, I have made myself accomplished as an alchemist, and shall seek by observation and experiment to make new dis-

coveries in this art. I have learned all that the science of those that have gone before can tell me, and notably much from the Arabian alchemists in their universities at Toledo and Cordova in Spain ; but yet I am convinced that there is much more to be invented in the true use of alchemy for the physician, which is not the search for the philosopher's stone to turn all metal to gold, but to find new chemicals which can be used as remedies for disease. The action of minerals upon the human frame, in their noxious forms, has already been proved in the many poisons in use at the present day, poisons which, many of them, have an entirely opposite effect ; therefore I am convinced that certain ones may be used as antidotes for others, and this action of poisons I am studying in a careful series of original experiments. And as healing may be effected not only by dosing of medicaments, both of minerals and simples, but also by chirurgery, through operations of the knife, and through the blood, both by the letting of it, as in bleeding for fevers, and equally by the skilful staunching of wounds, and also wonderfully by the injection of medicaments into the blood ; therefore, I have rendered

myself an expert chirurgeon. I am studying especially the blood, both by my own experiments with animals, and by gathering such data as I can from barbers, soldiers, huntsmen, headsmen, shepherds, and slaughterers of animals, believing that it is by observation and experiment rather than by following old fables that we arrive at knowledge. These, then, be the reasons why I reject the title of astrologer and claim those of chirurgeon and alchemist, hoping also to attain to that of magician, but not claiming as yet to have mastered the mysteries of the magical operations of mind upon matter.''

After this exposition of his aims and views there followed a record of his experiments in finding antidotes for poisons, and careful descriptions of the progress of many disorders; but there were none of the plague. The diary stopped abruptly with the year 1511, the date of Giorgione's death. And yet this was the plague year, and Dr. Zanelli lived and labored for a decade longer. Why was there no register of his observations during this period? As Van examined the book more closely, he became convinced that there had been a record, and

that it had been torn out. Why was this? Had the author himself destroyed it as containing criminating revelations? Or had it been burned with his library by the Inquisition? If so, why had any portion of the book been spared? What he had read he reported on to the contessa as perfectly innocent and sane; but this did not in the least satisfy her.

"His insanity probably began to develop at this very period," she said. "The destruction of the record was in all likelihood his own act, since the Inquisition would undoubtedly have made no nice distinctions in favor of exempting the record of innocent years from the flames. It is the work of a cunning mind which destroys damaging evidence, and perfectly consistent with insanity. My only hope now is to learn something of this singular man and of other members of our family from my husband's aunt, for I have a premonition that Angelo will not be successful in India."

The contessa's premonition was realized. The next letter from Angelo brought the disappointing information that he had reached the town where Dr. Chrysolarus had resided only to find that the Dr. Zanelli to whom he

referred could not possibly have been his ancestor.

"We pored over old papers until late in the night," he wrote, "to be intrigued at times by strange similarities, but to be convinced at last by the incontestable evidence of dates that this is only a strange similarity in names. The Dr. Zanelli whose papers I have just examined lived here in India for many years after our ancestor was executed in Venice. The hand in which the records are written is very different from the precise script of the old alchemist, though his manner of experimenting and of recording his experiments is marvellously similar. It is also hardly possible that the Chrysolarus whose partner he was could have been the same man who studied with my ancestor, though he may have been of the same family; for my host, while he is certain that he was originally of Greek extraction, believes that his branch of the family have lived for several centuries in India, while the Venetian student or spy came from Constantinople, and was heard from by members of our family as living in Constantinople after the alchemist's death. So, dearest mother, though greatly puzzled by the baffling

coincidence of two such unusual names as Zanelli and Chrysolarus appearing in conjunction in two such distant places at nearly the same time, we are forced to the conclusion that they were different men. I wish that I might have proved them to be the same, for there is no doubt that the Indian pair were as eminent in science as they were benevolent and upright in character, of which there is abundant evidence. My host, too, is a most amiable and cultured man, but driven and overworked. He has organized a hospital, in which the sick are gathered, but it cannot contain all the applicants, and he cannot answer all the calls for his attendance. In the presence of so much misery my own anxiety seems the acme of selfishness. My quest is closed, but it matters not. Here is work for me to do, and here I shall remain for the present, nursing these poor people. If I could induce some physician with any knowledge of this dread disease to join me here I would not grudge the expense, and I beg you, mother, to see some of the savants at the convention now in progress in Venice and see what can be done."

The contessa did not need to advise with any

of these learned people. She had become convinced of Van's fitness for such an enterprise, and they quickly came to an agreement, for this was just the opportunity for which Van had been hoping, and he hastened away to join Angelo in India.

It was Winnie's turn now to bear absence and waiting bravely, but both she and Tib found comfort in working for others. They kept up their sketching and reading also, for they reminded each other that their days of privilege in Venice were almost over, and a conversation took place shortly after this which precipitated their return to America. They were chatting with the contessa on the balcony when Winnie chanced to remark: "I want, before I go home, to make a drawing of the most typical of the old Venetians, and I have decided that I have found him in Andrea Verocchio's statue of the 'Condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni.' We know of him through history only as a soldier of fortune, a mercenary soldier, selling his sword to the State for twelve hundred ducats a month; but look at the statue, and you can see why the sculptor deserved his appellation 'Andrew the Keen-eyed.' There is so much of in-

dividual character there that, as I studied it from the doorway opposite, I felt that we would never have known the man if Verocchio had not placed him there for all time to face down his detractors. I believe that Ruskin is right when he says that there is not a more glorious work of sculpture existing in the world."

"Ruskin must be taken with a grain of salt, I find," said Tib; "but if he had said equestrian statue, instead of including all sculpture, I would have agreed with him."

"We always hear," said the contessa, "that the statue was partly the work of Leopardi; but Verocchio was by far the greater sculptor. I wonder how much of the work was really his?"

"I fancy all the real art part," said Winnie. "Leopardi merely cast it from Verocchio's designs after his death. Let me read you what Perkins says of the statue in his 'Tuscan Sculptors.' He is always measured and just, and you will accept his estimate, if not that of Ruskin. Listen to this extract, and tell me if I have not chosen well in taking him for my typical Venetian:

"'The stalwart figure of Colleoni, clad in armor, with a helmet upon his head, is the most perfect embodiment of the idea which history gives us of an Italian condottiere. As his horse, with arched neck and slightly bent head, paces slowly forward, he, sitting straight in his saddle, turns to look over his left shoulder, showing us a sternly marked countenance, with deep-set eyes, whose intensity of expression reveals a character of iron which never recoiled before any obstacle. The stern simplicity of the rider is happily-set off by the richness of detail lavished upon the saddle, the breastplate, the crupper, and the knotted mane of his steed; and the effect of the whole group is heightened by the very elegant pedestal upon which Leopardi has placed it.'"

Tib had listened attentively. "Yes," she said, "he is certainly the type of the warrior; but I like better the kind of man we see in the portraits of Venetian scholars, artists, and statesmen. I think it is Stearns who says that there is much more of pathos than of pride in the faces of the old senators and doges in the portraits in the Ducal Palace; that they look careworn and sleepless. In speaking of Tinto-

retto's portrait of Pasquale Cicogna he notes a look of judicial severity which he thinks inseparable from a high public position, 'combined with such purity, benevolence, and amiability that we accept him at once as the type of the noble Venetian.' I have always thought that Count Angelo grown older would look like that portrait; and another remark of Stearns's so exactly describes him: 'When you meet a nobleman of real ability, in whose face there is no appearance of family pride, you may feel sure that he is a true aristocrat.'"

There was no affectation in the utter absence of self-consciousness with which Tib spoke of Count Angelo. She was deeply interested in him; but there was no thought of herself in this interest. Every one else, however, was embarrassed by the remark, and there was a little pause in the conversation, during which Winnie wrathfully addressed her in her thoughts as a little idiot, and wondered when she would find out that she was in love.

The contessa also winced at this frank expression of admiration, and there was a look of almost motherly pity in her face, though she joined in the conversation in a cold, forced

voice. "The Venetian nobles had many of them very little to be proud of," was her first remark. "At one time, when the republic was in need of money, patents of nobility were sold by the State at fifty thousand ducats apiece, and seventy families profited by the occasion to frankly buy the rank, which is as truly sold to-day when a poor noble makes a rich marriage."

"The transaction you speak of was more creditable," said Tib, "because it might be considered that the State was conferring a decoration for a very generous gift for the cause of patriotism."

The contessa shook her head. "A sale in both instances," she said. "If American girls only knew, as I do, how heavily the coronet rests on the head of many a fair marchesa and contessa they would not be so mad for titles. How is it Owen Meredith speaks of the season in London?

"'When strawberries are sold in pottles like sheaves,
And young ladies are sold for the strawberry leaves.'"

"Oh, I see," said Winnie; "the strawberry leaves between the pearls on the coronet. I never understood the allusion before. Adelaide threw away a coronet in France, and I

don't think that any of us place an overweening value upon them; but I can't understand, my dear contessa, why you, of all persons, should

> " 'slight the highly born with rank afflicted,
> Or treat with lofty scorn the well-connected.' "

There was a spice of malice in Winnie's fling, for she could not comprehend the contessa's motive for a remark which she felt was unjustly directed at Tib.

"My own marriage was happier than most international ones," the contessa replied; "but national temperaments as well as customs and education are so different that such connections rarely prove congenial."

Tib did not understand this fencing between the contessa and Winnie, but she vaguely felt a chill in the atmosphere, as though they were sailing near an unseen iceberg, and, as in the figure which it suggested, knew that the chill meant danger, and so tactfully piloted the conversation, as she thought, into other channels.

"I do not wonder that so many foreigners love to live in Venice, though the Palazzo Rezzonico, Browning's home, with all its 'arched windows and pillared balconies,' seems too cold and grand for any sense of home feeling or

mirth. I thought the rear entrance far more picturesque than the front one. Its ceilings, by Tiepolo and Tiepoletto, and its grand proportions all help give it an impression of vastness, but the very spirit of desolation seems to brood in the rooms."

"It was not so in the days of the Rezzonicos," said the contessa. "You know Pope Clement XIII. was of that family. It is one of our best; and when Joseph II. visited Venice, in 1769, the republic gave him a concert in this palace, said to be one of the most splendid entertainments ever given in the city."

"It must have been warmer and brighter even in Browning's lifetime," said Tib; "but now I could not help feeling as if it were his tomb, especially when I read that tablet on the wall:

A
ROBERTO BROWNING,
Morto in questo Palazzo,
Venezia Pose.

Open my heart, and you will see
Graved inside of it Italy.

I can understand those words, and the inscription on Rawdon Brown's tomb :

> "'Anglus Brown am I,
> Although my heart's Venetian.'"

"Who was Rawdon Brown?" asked Winnie.

"He was an Englishman," replied Tib, "who came to Venice intending to stay a week, and lived here forty years, never leaving it until his death. Here is the sonnet which Browning wrote about the incident. I found it in an old number of the *Century* :

> "'Sighed Rawdon Brown : "Yes, I'm departing, Toni !
> I needs must, just this once before I die,
> Revisit England : Anglus Brown am I,
> Although my heart's Venetian. Yes, old crony—
> Venice and London—London's Death the bony
> Compared with Life—that's Venice ! What a sky,
> A sea, this morning ! One last look, good-by.
> Ca Pesaro ! No lion—I'm a coney
> To weep ! I'm dazzled ; 'tis that sun I view
> Rippling the—the—Cospetto, Toni ! Down
> With carpet bag, and off with valise straps !
> *Bella Venezia, non ti lascio piu !*"
> Nor did Brown ever leave her. Well, perhaps
> Browning next week may find himself quite Brown.'

"Do you know," Tib continued, after a pause, "that is exactly the way I feel? I believe I love Venice as much as Count Angelo does. I cannot bear to think of going back, and yet America is my home, and father and mother and my lifework are there, and I must not become de-Americanized."

"I don't know about that," Winnie replied with intention. "Your lifework appears to me to be to paint and to draw, and if you can find a way of disposing of your work while you do it here, perhaps your parents will join you, and you can live in some old Venetian palace, and listen, as we do now, from its cushioned balcony, to the caressing plash of the sea upon its marble steps."

Tib's eyes shone with eagerness; but the contessa spoke up quickly in a voice that quivered a little with suppressed excitement, though she held herself in admirable control.

"I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Smith when I was visiting my father, and I hardly think that they would fit into Venetian life. I cannot imagine Mr. Smith loitering on a balcony. He is far too energetic to be content with our dreamy existence. I fear that it

would be a great mistake to tear them away from their familiar surroundings."

"Yes," Tib assented; "father could never learn to 'loiter.' He might be so old and lame that he would have to hobble, but it would be briskly."

"But you know," Winnie insisted, "that Henry James says there are two kinds of life in Venice, and the Grand Canal 'may mean to you the balcony of a high and well-loved palace, the memory of irresistible evenings of endless lingering and looking, or the restlessness of a fresh curiosity and methodical inquiry in a gondola piled with references.'"

"Gondola life would suit father exactly," Tib exclaimed, clapping her hands; "he would never weary of the surprises of new exploration and the verification of all his odd scraps of information, for he has been a great reader. And mother is so calm and peaceful, a balcony like this would be an endless delight to her. To give them the evening of their life in Venice! Ah! that is something to look forward to, to work for with every power of my being."

"Believe me, no," said the contessa gently but firmly. "They would be very homesick

here. I tried it with my own father. He spent a month here, and then went home disgusted with the shiftless ways of the Italians. He could never see the picturesqeness of dirt, and unpleasant odors drove him crazy. He used to say that Dickens was the only writer that had told the truth about Venice. There were several passages in 'Little Dorrit' which he was so fond of quoting and applying that I have them quite by heart: 'Dungeon-like tenements, with their walls besmeared with a thousand downward stains and streaks, as if every crazy aperture in them had been weeping tears of rust into the Adriatic for centuries, or blotched with mould, as if missionary maps were bursting out of them to impart geographical knowledge; barred windows, which seemed to belong to jails for criminal rats, with their lattice blinds all hanging askew and something draggled and dirty dangling out of most of them.' He said that when he wanted the sea, he preferred it from the deck of a good ship, and he did not want it to follow him into his very house, so that he could never get the odor of bilge water and an ebb tide on a weedy shore out of his nostrils. It was all a great mistake, and he

went back to Scup Haven with infinite relief, and used to declare that the sunsets on Long Island Sound were far more beautiful than any he ever saw in Venice. Think of that! Why, there is no place in the world where sunsets are so beautiful as here. Who do you think has best painted our sunsets? To my mind, Ziem is too gaudy, Turner's splendid visions too unreal, and Rico is brilliant, but artificial and *chic*. Where is the perfect Venice?"

"Only here," Tib replied, for Winnie was strangely silent. She was watching the contessa with something like anger in her scrutiny; and Tib, who longed to make peace, followed the contessa's lead. "If your point of view is the balcony," she said, "everything is moving before you; if a gondola, then you are moving. Did you not experience a feeling of phantasmagoria the other evening when the solid Campanile, silhouetted against the palpitating sky, seemed, with its reflection, actually to waver with the rocking of our gondola? That shimmering incandescence cannot be painted—it can only be described, and I think that of all writers Shelley has done it best. Do you remember:

"'And before that charm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome and spire
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of the ocean
To the sulphur-tinted skies.'"

"Exactly; but it takes either a poet or an artist to feel that. My father was neither. Take my advice, my dear, and do not urge your parents to come to Venice."

The contessa vanished into the house as she spoke, and Winnie clenched her small fist and shook it menacingly at her retreating figure.

"What does it all mean?" Tib asked, wonderingly.

"I should think you would ask," Winnie replied with warmth. "It means that she is a meddling, viperous old thing, and wants to make us leave Venice never to return."

"Oh, no!" Tib exclaimed. "The contessa has been very kind to us—you know she has, Winnie. How can you talk so?"

"She was kind enough until she discovered that Count Angelo liked you, and then she packed him off to India, and now she is trying to get you away before he returns!"

"How absurd! The contessa is too clever a woman to imagine such an impossible state of affairs, and she would never have acted upon such a supposition unless the danger really existed."

"Well, it does exist."

Tib flushed painfully. "Winnie, you are carrying your joke too far."

"I am not joking; and it is not a figment of anybody's imagination, but actual fact. He told me so himself."

In the excitement of the moment Winnie had gone too far. She realized suddenly that Count Angelo had told her in confidence, and she pulled herself sharply together, and in answer to Tib's questions, "Told you what?" "Who told you?" replied rather lamely, "that the contessa did not approve of her son's liking for you. It was Van told me, and the contessa tried to make Van her confederate. She wanted him to urge us to return to America; but Van had no notion of aiding her—quite the contrary. If Count Angelo has not already proposed to you, he will after Van gets hold of him."

"O Winnie!" Tib cried in real distress.

"How could you be so unkind, so disloyal as to talk about me in such a way to Van!"

"I don't see why you should be so indignant; all I said was that I believed you and Count Angelo were really in love with one another, but were two precious innocents who did not know your own minds."

"And you took it upon yourselves to enlighten us, and are playing a little drama like that with which the friends of Beatrice and Benedict amused themselves—you to try to make me believe that Count Angelo cares for me when he does not, and Van to tell Count Angelo that I love him. O Winnie, Winnie, I would not have believed it of you!"

"Now, Tib, listen to reason. Van will not do anything of the kind. He is discreet, and he has the highest esteem for you. You may trust him implicitly. And as for the contessa, she is only a spiteful old cat, and we won't pay her whims the least attention."

But Tib was seriously hurt and indignant, and though she forgave Winnie, knowing that her friend had intended it all for her good, she could not bear to remain in Venice until the count's return. She had no more faith in

Van's discretion than in Winnie's, and had no mind to remain a passive victim of their plots. She argued to herself, too, that to remain, now that she knew what they were trying to do, was to countenance their plans and to be in some sort an agent in them. "It could never have been in any case," she told herself. "Lolo and I do not love one another; but it was such a beautiful friendship. Why did they spoil it, for now all the sweet unconsciousness is gone, and it can never be quite the same. I have lost my little playmate. He can never be Lolo to me again or I Nellie Zanelli." The contessa's unkindness hurt her cruelly. "If it had been true," she wondered, "why should she have wished to separate us? It is only her own story over again; our parents were friends and neighbors. Her father, the old sea captain, had a high respect for mine, and used to love to sit on our porch and spin sea yarns and watch the Scup Haven sunsets. Why should a title make such a difference? Did Angelo share this feeling? she wondered. Was all this quest to vindicate a dead ancestor's honor only an idle excuse for slipping away out of danger when he felt himself being drawn toward a

mésalliance? She pressed her burning face into her pillow. There was no such thing as honor or nobility or love anywhere. What was she saying? Yes, they were all waiting for her at home in the rugged father and the devoted mother whom those people despised. And she, who knew their worth, how had she neglected and slighted them, living with perfect content away from them all these months in a fool's paradise of dream and cloud! But she had awakened at last, and knew where the true happiness waited for her. Heartsick and wounded more by the supposed slight to her loved parents than to herself, Tib decided upon immediate departure. Winnie would have preferred to have delayed until Van's return, but she knew that he too would soon sail for America; and as she felt in a remorseful way that she was in some sort to blame for all this, she determined not to desert her friend. Professor Waite's arguments and Adelaide's entreaties were of no avail, the less so as the contessa, on hearing Tib's decision, made no attempt to dissuade her, though her heart yearned for the child, and was pained by the coldness with which Tib received the (what seemed to her

hypocritical) messages of affection to her parents. She would not have been so misjudged if Tib could have understood her real motives or could have read the following letter, which the contessa had received from her relative shortly after Van's departure :

My dear Cousin : This is a strange question which you ask me, " Have any members of the Zanelli family ever shown a tendency to insanity ?" You assure me that your reasons for asking this question are weighty, and that my answer shall be held in confidence. As for this last assurance, I care not who knows, for I can truly reply that there has never been but one case of insanity in our long line, and I am thankful that case *is* clearly proved. Our ancestor, Giovanni Zanelli, the so-called alchemist, who suffered death as a malefactor, was mad, and this his own writings testify ; but for this we should all be grateful, since it absolves him of all accountability for the deeds which he freely confessed both before the tribunal and in his own handwriting in a little diary which he kept in a cabinet in his private apartments in your house. My grandfather, when visiting

your husband's grandmother, was so impressed with horror on reading this record, that he cut out the leaves of the diary and brought them away, intending to burn them. His conscience would not, however, allow him to do this, and after his return to Rome he could never bring himself to return them to his relative and hostess, thinking that if she did not know their contents it was cruelty to inform her. My father, to whom he showed them later in life, put the same construction upon them that I do, grateful that they proved the insanity of one whose misdeeds have always been our shame. He sent the leaves to your husband, who misjudged the motive, considered the act an insult, and returned them. I would have said nothing about them but for your question, as your husband wrote that he intended that neither you nor your son should ever hear of this ancestor. I am sure, however, that he was wrong, and that you will be as glad as I am to know that this unfortunate man was demented. If no other proof were to be found, the internal evidence contained in his observations on the discovery of "a sovereign ointment for the plague" is sufficient. This crazy man believed that he

had found an unfailing cure for this dread disease in blood freshly drawn from a goat, itself diseased, which he kept tethered in the garden back of his laboratory. He was led to this insane and dangerous conclusion by the fact that the animal had been owned by a woman who was afflicted with the plague in its early stages, and seeing her goat attacked and wounded by a savage dog, she had rushed out to drive him away, and was herself bitten. Dr. Zanelli imagined that in binding up the goat's wound some of its blood had been transfused to her own bleeding hands. At any rate, being called in after this accident, he watched the progress of the case, and as the woman most unfortunately recovered from the plague, he came to the conclusion which I have stated, bought her goat, and inoculated his plague-smitten patients with its poisonous blood. In this way he was doubtless responsible for the death of many of the good citizens of Venice. Not morally responsible, however, and he should have been confined in a madhouse instead of executed. Some time after his death a letter was received through a member of the De Rovere family, which we judge to have been written by that Chrysolarus

who was considered his confederate. It besought the son of Giovanni Zanelli to remove to Constantinople, where he would be cared for by those who knew and could prove his father's innocence. This invitation was not accepted, it being thought at the time to come from the Sultan, who was supposed to have bribed Dr. Zanelli to the murder of his fellow-citizens. Your husband knew of this letter, and regarded it, as we do, as written by Chrysolarus—for who else could prove his innocence, and how could it be proved excepting by showing that he was a madman?

Trusting that you may derive as much satisfaction from this conclusion that we have always experienced, I rest,

Your affectionate cousin,

FAUSTINA.

On reading this letter, all hope died in the contessa's heart. She did not question the conclusion arrived at by her relative, and she now felt that for Angelo to marry would be a positive crime. He might any day become a maniac, and her only thought was to spare both her son and Tib the calamity of loving one an-

other, if indeed such a calamity had not already happened. She knew that she was misunderstood, but she believed that she was acting for the best good of both, and she did not falter.

Just before their departure, Winnie and Tib made a farewell visit to the model, Violante, and arranged that the school for laundry work and the excursions to the Lido should continue through the summer. There was much lamenting and kissing of hands both by Violante, her sister, and the children—for the two American girls had gained the affection of all who knew them. Violante reminded them that there was another of the old letters which they had not read. Tib disclaimed any further interest in them, but Winnie suggested that they might prove to be of importance to Count Angelo, and they accepted it from Violante, and presented it unread to the contessa, who looked it over and mailed it to her son, though she found nothing in it to change her belief in the fatal heritage of insanity bequeathed by Dr. Zanelli to his descendants. The contessa was in the little company that escorted Winnie and Tib to the railway station, but their farewells were forced

and coldly polite. Tib found on their seat—as the contessa had so often prepared it for their gondola trips to the lagoons—a dainty basket of luncheon. Winnie scoffed volubly, and declared that a morsel of it would choke her; that if she had one of the old alchemist's test glasses it would have shattered at the first drop of the Chianti, and she gave it all ostentatiously away to a large family party who were their travelling companions, and regretted her contumely hungrily and crossly in the latter part of the day. But Tib hardly knew that she was hungry and faint. She leaned back with closed eyelids, through which the tears were creeping, for she knew that her dream of Venice was dead, and that whatever solace in work and joy in self-renunciation her future might have in store, Venice would always be, as now,

> "So dear, that in the memory she remains
> Like an old love, who would indeed have been
> Our only love, but died."

And Angelo? The news that Tib had left Venice was indeed a great surprise; but it did not bring any sense of personal loss, for he had decided to remain where he felt that he was needed and was doing good until the special

great exigency had passed. After that the world might be wide, but he would find her somewhere, for the papers which his mother had sent him, and which had been discovered through Tib's agency, had removed the horrible weight which had been crushing his mind and had awakened hope in his heart.

The first of these manuscripts was another letter from Orazio Vecelli to Violante Palma:

ADMIRED AND LOVED LADY: I am smitten of a grievous malady, wherefrom I fear me I shall not recover, since my beloved master, who alone had the secret of its cure, is no longer with us. Wherefore I am minded to do quickly all needful things.

I have already written you how my fellow-pupil, Chrysolarus, deserted my master in his sore peril in cowardice, lest he also should fall under the ban of the Church. Yet was he not without compunction, for I have latterly received a written declaration of our dear master's innocence signed by this remorseful disciple. This paper was neither dated nor was the address of the sender given, showing that he is still in fear of his life. It was brought me by

a sailor, who said that he had received it in some port of the Indies. Alas! it came too late to be of any service to our dear master, nor can I send it to his family, for they have left Venice, and their house stands empty and forlorn, nor know I whether they will ever come back to occupy it. I paused lately before my good master's door, blocked by the Inquisition, but I found an entrance over the garden wall, which as a lad I had often scaled with the help of the overhanging branches of the tamarisk tree; and making my way, like a thief, through a broken shutter into the house, I placed this declaration of his disciple Chrysolarus behind the portrait of my revered master, which my father painted in happier times.

I write you all this, most esteemed lady, not alone because of the interest which I know you have always felt in my master, and because I know what joy it will give you to know of this tardy refutation of that great calumny, but also because, though older than myself, God may order it that you live longer, and I would that some one other than I possess the knowledge of the hiding-place of this paper, to convey the same to any member of that unhappy

family, should their whereabouts become known.

May time kindly spare to you that beauty which so many celebrated artists have delighted in recording, and may providence from plague and pestilence and all other mischiefs ever protect you, is the prayer of

Your ladyship's devoted servitor,

ORAZIO VECELLI.

Only a few days after writing this letter, Orazio and his father both died of the plague—Orazio in the public pest-house and the great painter alone in his studio. But Chrysolarus's refutation had at last reached the family of the maligned man. The contessa found it behind the portrait, and with it another long letter containing a revelation so astounding that Orazio had not dared to hint at it in his letter to Violante, and, indeed, would hardly have left the revelation where it could be found, were it not that the actors in the drama were either dead or nearing that safe haven where the rage of the most powerful enemy cannot follow. Chrysolarus had proved Dr. Zanelli's innocence, but Orazio did not dare to have the case

tried over again, as it would have been had it been known that the alchemist had escaped the execution sentence and was in reality living in safety at that time in India.

The time had not then come for this disclosure; but to Angelo the letter explained all that had seemed to him so mysterious and so impossible to reconcile in the disagreement of dates and the different handwriting, and his ancestor's identity with the learned and benevolent man whose record in India he had so greatly admired was now incontestably proven.

The letter was addressed to the alchemist's son, and read as follows:

To Ascanio Zanelli, wherever he may be:

Before you shall have received this, my dear son, the trusty messenger by whom I send it has promised to break to you gently the tidings (which, from their astounding improbability and the joy with which I doubt not they will be welcomed, might otherwise prove too great a shock for your delicate sensibility) that the father whom you have mourned as dead, and whose dishonored corpse hundreds of his townspeople believed that they saw burned in

Venice, by the grace of Heaven miraculously escaped *ab hoste maligno*, and is now both alive and, with the exception of a cramping of my fingers by rheumatism, in good health. After the first shock of this revelation is over, you will be consumed with curiosity to know how this can be, and this most natural desire I will now gratify.

You doubtless remember with affection my pupil, Orazio Vecelli, and the delight which you took in the playing upon the organ of his fair sister Lavinia, when on certain occasions I took you with me to the house of my friend the great painter, Titian Vecelli. You will also recall the personages who most did frequent his society, and the pleasure I had in their company. Know then, my dear son, that my wonderful preservation from death is due to the devotion, daring, and ingenuity of that same coterie, with whom I used to hold such delightful converse.

It is a thing almost incredible that so many should have been in the secret and should have had actual parts to play in the carrying out of the plot, and yet nothing have been discovered by the spies of the Council of Ten, who are

everywhere. Yet such was the unanimity of feeling existing between this band of brothers, such their closeness in guarding the secret, that not only was my escape successfully carried out, but (as I am informed by a Venetian lately arrived in India, who knew not with whom he was speaking) it is universally believed, both by the populace and the officers of the law and of the Inquisition, that I suffered death, as was designed.

This, therefore, was the manner in which the deed was accomplished: My friends were not idle while I lay in prison before my condemnation, for they knew of my arrest, and Cardinal Bembo was informed of what the Inquisitor was plotting against me. He therefore appeared in my behalf at the trial and labored exceedingly for me, but could effect nothing. All this was freely discussed one evening at Titian's garden, all present being strongly in my favor excepting the poet Aretino. Therefore, after he and all others of the company had taken gondolas for home, Sansovino, Titian, and Bembo began to plot for my rescue. As Titian was then painting one of his great frescoes in the Ducal Palace, he passed often in and out,

and his gondola and gondoliers were well known to the guards of the palace. Sansovino also, in his character of architect to the government, was also well known, and had access to every part of the palace; while Bembo, as keeper of the library, was frequently seen coming and going. Therefore it was an easy matter for any of the three to enter or leave the building at will, or to penetrate to any part of it so far as the Bridge of Sighs, which connected it with the prisons on the other side of the canal. But to pass that bridge and enter the cells of the condemned was another matter, strict watch being kept upon the prisoners, and this vigilance being increased as the time approached for their execution. Nevertheless, Sansovino managed to get a permit from the superintendent of the prison to visit it for the purpose of observing what repairs might be necessary. This he did several times, so that the two jailers who relieved each other's watch became accustomed to seeing him taking measurements and examining the locks and suggesting better contrivances for the safe-keeping of the prisoners. In this way he took a wax mould of the lock to my cell, and himself made

a key to fit it—for he was very expert in iron work, and had a forge in his own apartments, where he made knockers and such small objects —but he took care not to excite suspicion by betraying any acquaintance with me or desire to see me. Indeed, I had thought myself deserted of my friends, for none came to me but you, who were permitted to take farewell of me in the presence of the jailer. Only the priest who was appointed to minister spiritual consolation was allowed to remain with me the last night. But Cardinal Bembo effected that Pomponio, the oldest son of Titian, a priest indeed, but a devil for daring and adventure, should be appointed to this office. Wild as he was, he had a kindly heart, and to him principally I owe my safety. He came to me also before the last night and told me to be of good courage, for my rescue was in preparation.

I was to be strangled at daybreak and my body delivered to the agents of the Inquisition to be publicly burned; but my three friends, Titian, Bembo, and Sansovino, so bribed not only the executioner, but all others who had a right to see to the carrying out of the sentence, that their duty was most carelessly done, and

yet none of these men suspected that I had gotten clean off, but only that certain rigors of the sentence were omitted. The executioner was told that I had swallowed poison and died that night, and as my body was to be publicly burned, he felt that even if not actually dead I soon would be, and he was persuaded by Pomponio by a large gift of money to leave my body unviolated by the strangler's cord. Cardinal Bembo had obtained, for the sake of my family, the grace that my corpse should not be roughly handled, but should be borne from my cell to my funeral pyre in an open coffin, and should be burned without being taken therefrom. This coffin was sent to my cell on the eve of my execution, and was carefully examined by the jailers; but as it was simply a lidless coffin with nothing therein, it excited no suspicions. But when Pomponio came, had he been properly searched much might have been discovered and all spoiled, for he wore under his priest's gown a robe of Sansovino's with a hood, and, most dangerous evidence of all, had it been found upon him, a mask which Sansovino (who was most expert in modelling) had fashioned in wax, and which reproduced my fea-

tures to the very life, or rather death, for the complexion had the pallor of a corpse. Being arrived with these accessories, as soon as we were unobserved he proceeded to construct an effigy with one of my sheets and the stuffing of my mattress, which he dressed in the sanbenito, or yellow shroud which had been sent by the Inquisition, and in which victims were burned. We fastened the mask under the yellow cap, and with its closed eyes and real hair and beard, it had a most natural effect; and then we laid it on the bed, adding the waxen hands and bare feet which Sansovino had not neglected to send. Then with all speed I put on the hooded garment of the architect, and with the false key let myself out of my own cell and passed into a cell that was not occupied, where I pretended to be busied with some drawing which Sansovino had left there that morning. The jailer going his rounds looked first through the wicket into my cell, and seeing me, as he supposed, stretched on my bed, the door safely locked, and the priest on his knees, next came to the open door of the cell where I sat, and was surprised to see the architect there. Nevertheless, imagining that the other jailer had let

me in during his watch, as I handed him the architect's passport, my face shrouded in the hood and my figure sufficiently resembling that of Sansovino, he suspected nothing and obligingly let me out. This was the crucial moment; but my peril was not over, for I had to pass across the Bridge of Sighs and through the Ducal Palace. Here, indeed, I knew that Titian awaited me, and indeed his was one of the first figures that I saw as I entered the palace. But so eminent a man could not stand in a public place long without attracting attention, and he was surrounded by a group of men, of whom he had been vainly striving to rid himself. Not daring to approach, I stood aloof, but the instant that Titian saw me he exclaimed: "Ah, there is Sansovino! I must have him to dinner with me to-night," and with scant ceremony to the others, he thrust his arm through mine and hurried me through the halls and down the Giant's Staircase. Yet still we were not safe, for as we went we were spied by Aretino, who fell a-gaping with wonder, crying that he had just come from the library, where he had left Sansovino, yet here he was. Titian tried to push by him, but he stuck to him, saying that

since it was his good fortune to have found him, he was minded to go home with him and listen to the playing of his lovely daughter. In this crisis Bembo came to our aid, for he had stationed himself between the two columns of the Piazzetta to watch, and seeing the plight we were in, he rushed forward and, affecting a great fondness for Aretino, whom, however, he could not abide, he begged him to come to his rooms and read his last comedy to a company of literati there assembled. And Aretino, greatly flattered, allowed himself to be led off. Despite the danger I was in, I laughed when I thought of the joke, and I wondered whether Bembo found others to listen with him to the play; and then for the first time I knew how much he loved me, since he was willing to submit to such penance for my sake. At the Riva we found Titian's gondola in waiting with Orazio and a worthy young gentleman of the Cadore country, betrothed to Lavinia—for Titian would not trust to the silence of his servants—and these young men rowed us out to Chioggia, where was a ship setting sail for Constantinople, in which, being supplied with funds by my friends, I took passage, calling down

the blessings of Heaven on the heads of my preservers.

They promised to inform you of my rescue, but urged me not to write either to you or them, as by so doing I might endanger all their lives. Wherefore for a time I kept silence. But at Constantinople, whom should I meet but my pupil, Hieronymus Chrysolarus, who was overjoyed to see me safe, and fell upon his knees, begging me to forgive his desertion, which I readily did, having compassion on the weakness of flesh, and knowing in what peril he stood. Moreover, he has amply retrieved his fault, for no son could be more loving and duteous than he. I abode with him many months in Constantinople, and from thence, being consumed with such hunger of heart to lay eyes on you that I could in no wise restrain myself, I wrote you under an assumed name, but in such guise that I thought you must understand, begging you to join me. Not daring to compromise my dear friends in Venice by sending the letter to them, I sent it to Genoa, in care of Francesco de Rovere, of the family of Pope Julian. For I argued that as that pontiff had befriended me on account of service done

him in reference to the Borgia poison, you might have sought the patronage of his family, and if not, for the sake of that service they might be minded to find you and deliver the letter. But having waited a whole year and no answer coming from you, I began to despair of the letter having reached you; and seeing myself observed in the street one day, and followed by a stranger habited like a Venetian, I feared lest the letter might have fallen into the hands of my enemies and that I was spied upon. Therefore, though I had shaken off this follower, I was ill at ease, and Chrysolarus likewise, so that we travelled together to India, passing through many strange lands, and finally settled in this place, which we judged remote enough to free us from all danger. Situate on a spur of the Himalaya, the air is salubrious, and we are accommodated in a well-ordered house with native servants, and have built up a reputation as wise physicians, so that we have an extended practice, Chrysolarus travelling widely at the call of the wealthy princes and nabobs. But I bide quietly, devoting myself to my experiments, and happy therein, excepting that I long for you, my dear son;

wherefore I beseech of you that you so arrange your affairs that you come out to me, whether for a longer or a shorter time, and if you are in need of money to defray the expense of the journey, and will write me how it can reach you, I will send it to you. The messenger whereby I send this is most trusty. He is a Venetian sailor who fell sick of a fever, and was left in Bombay to die ; but Chrysolarus chancing to be in the city at the time, heard of his case, and caused him to be brought to our home in a palanquin, where I nursed him back to health ; for which service he has sworn to seek out your whereabouts and deliver into your hands this letter, and failing in that, to give it most secretly to Orazio Vecelli. And so I trust it to his gratitude and sagacity and rest my vindication with time, which trieth every man's work, praying God as I did the night I was condemned to die :

> " Ab hoste maligno defende me,
> In hora mortis mæ voca me,
> Ut cum sanctis suis laudem te,
> In sæcula sæculorum. Amen."

And for thee, dear son, I leave my benedic-

tion, though our day has been stormy. *Noctem quietam concedet Dominum.*

Your loving father,
GIOVANNI ZANELLI.

To Angelo's mind all problems were solved, all barriers swept away ; but not so for the contessa. When he returned and told her the secret which her discerning eyes had long ago discovered, and announced his intention to set out upon another quest, her heart was torn with anguish. She could not crush his hopes that evening, but after he had kissed her good-night she took her Cousin Faustina's letter and the missing leaves which had been cut from the alchemist's diary down to his laboratory, where Van was sitting, and, patiently translating them for him, submitted the question of Dr. Zanelli's sanity to his judgment.

She was not prepared for the result ; for Van first sprang from his chair and excitedly paced the room ; then as she concluded with the alchemist's description of his discovery of the antidote for the plague, he fairly shouted :

" Maniac ! All who suspected him, persecuted him, tried and condemned him were

maniacs. He was the only sane physician of his time ; he was a martyr to science, a tremendous genius. Do you know what he did ? He anticipated the discoveries of modern bacteriology. He did not quite understand the entire import of his discovery ; but if they had not meddled with him, if they had left him in peace in this laboratory, instead of hounding him to ignominy and death, he would have saved the city, and the latest discovery of modern science would have been announced three centuries ago."

The contessa flitted from the room to the balcony, where her son was looking far out toward the Adriatic. Her heart was full of remorse for her part in the drama, which she had acted in all good faith, and she confessed all unreservedly.

"Can you forgive me? Will she forgive me?" she asked anxiously as Angelo drew her closely to him.

"If she loves me, there will be nothing to forgive," he replied. "She will understand that when she thought you were building an impenetrable wall between us you were in reality undermining the crumbling stones which blocked the doorway to our happiness."

Did she love him, and did Angelo find his Nellie Zanelli? 'Tis a question the author hopes to answer some day; but she must bid her reader farewell for the present, for this second quest of Angelo's has nothing to do with the story of the old alchemist or of Witch Winnie in Venice.

THE END.

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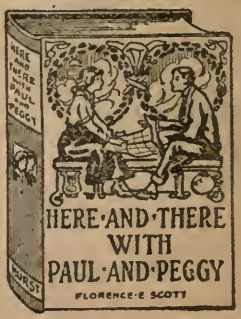

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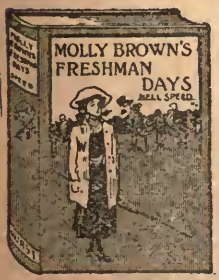

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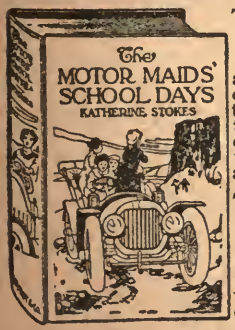

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